

No Such Thing As Coincidence

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by [KuroRiya](#)

Summary

Tino and Berwald were together through thick and thin. Tino, clumsy and small as he was, could always rely on his best friend to fend off the bullies with naught but a look. However, life takes a turn when his childhood friend is forced to move away. A few years later, Tino is a bit tougher, but heartbroken as he has to move away from the home full of his memories of Berwald. But perhaps fate isn't as cruel as he wants to think. (Story gets more 'explicit' towards the end.) Mostly SuFin, but multiple pairings, Nordic centric.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Chapter One

In retrospect, It could certainly be said that falling for your childhood/best friend is not the wisest course of action one could take. Especially if that friend happened to be moving. But that's in retrospect, and I therefore wasn't thinking along those lines at the time of the events I have lain out for you. For, had I been thinking as such, I would not be in the current state that I am. My mother calls it 'pining'. Well, I looked that up, and that is nowhere near how I'm feeling. Were you to magically gain the ability to read my emotions, you'd be getting a massive blast of heartbroken anguish mixed in with some morose depression and even a taste of grief. Got a word that sums all of that up? No. I didn't think so. And if any of you answered 'yes', I swear to the great St. Nick that I WILL find you, and you WILL be in pain. Honestly, can't you tell that I'm trying to have a melodramatic moment here? Anyway, yes, this whole thing started three years ago...Well, the depressing part... I guess the REAL beginning was a lot longer ago than that, when I was barely five. And yes, I am going to flashback. If you have objections, direct them elsewhere. This is my story, not yours. You can listen, or you can bitch. Completely up to you.

.....+.....

Like I said, I had just turned five, and had barely managed to get into kindergarten because of the way my birthday fell. But I did, which was a very positive thing in my life, if I reflect on it. Though I was almost a full year younger than everyone, this is how I met that aforementioned best friend.

Sorry, I got off track. My mom was ever the excitable one that day, and had dressed me up and taken pictures in front of the school. The only reason she got me to sit still long enough for the pictures was because I was terrified of going into the classroom.

After she was satisfied with her pictures, she took my hand and led me to my classroom. The one right at the end of the hall, adjacent to the doors that led to the playground. I'm sure if you're able to read this, you've been through the school system, and therefore kindergarten. We all no how that very first day of school is. It even worse than all of the future 'first days', because it is truly the first day. You are going to be away from trusted adults for an entire day. Surely I can't be the only one that has had this experience... I really hope not.

Anyway, I started freaking out, as several kindergarteners do. As soon as I was through that door, I was bawling, clinging to my mom's leg, begging her incoherently not to leave me there. As my mother was trying to pry me from herself, my teacher walked up and gave her a smile, acting as though I didn't exist, and like it was normal for kids to scream like that. (I realised years later that it is...) She assured my mother that I would be taken care of, but I was most definitely not convinced. I clung to that suit-clad leg like my little life depended on it, which I believed it did.

My mother finally managed to remove me from her leg, and quickly side-stepped out the door with a quick 'I love you.' This clearly distressed me further, as I began sobbing miserably. Thankfully, I wasn't the only one in the classroom that was crying. There was at least five others, and it was pretty clear that all of the others present had cried, if their puffy eyes said anything. The teacher tried her best to console me with promises that she couldn't keep. She assured me that my mother would return for me later, and that we were going to play lots of games together.

This calmed me considerably, and my tears stopped pouring out. This earned me a smile before she turned to greet the next parent that came in. I glanced at the other children, most of whom were at play. I considered joining them, but I'm not known to have a lot self confidence. I therefore chose to sit in a chair that was near the door, and watched the teacher interact with the parent that had stolen her attention from me. They chatted briefly before the lady left. I was a bit confused at first, not having seen the boy that had been behind his mother until she left. When I saw him, I was confused further. He didn't really look sad to see his mother leave. Not a single tear escaped the boy's eyes. I didn't know what to think of this strange boy, especially when he glanced my way. Well, I suppose that I did know what to think, though it wasn't quite on the mark. I was petrified by this boy. His face was so angry looking, like I had just kicked his puppy, and he was out for vengeance. (No, my five-year-old mind didn't use those words. I gotta fluff it up, you know? Make it sound smart!) I was contemplating whether or not to try and run away from him, but I was too scared to move when that gaze was on me. Lucky for me, the teacher called us all to the circle carpet, and told us to sit down. As soon as the boy's eyes were away from me, I bolted to the carpet, making sure that I wouldn't be near him.

After we were all in the circle, the teacher told us what we were going to be doing. We were instructed to say our name and something we like to do. (This was actually exciting in kindergarten, remember? It didn't start losing its charm until third grade.) She went around, starting from the right, and each child did as they were instructed. I was excited for my turn, and nearly squealed when the focus was on me.

"I'm Tino! I like to color!" I said, smiling happily. We continued down the line, finishing with the boy that I had been so scared off. He was silent, and we all waited for his introduction. After nearly a minute had passed, the teacher turned to him, and smiled gently.

"What is your name?" She asked him quietly. He looked up, staring at her as though contemplating on whether or not he was going to answer.

"Berwald." He finally replied. We all waited again, expecting to learn what he liked to do. He, however, was silent, staring at the floor. The teacher prompted him again, asking what he liked to do, and he responded, after a pause.

"Clay." Though obviously a bit cynical, the teacher nodded, smiled, and moved on. She read to us, holding the book open so all of us could see the pictures, then instructed us to go and pick seats at the little tables. Everyone scrambled, trying to find seats near the friends they had made before the school-day had begun. Not having played with any of the other children, I simply went to an empty table and sat in the blue chair. I was one of the first to sit down, so I had to wait as everyone else picked their seats. A boy sat by me, his long blonde hair slightly obscuring his face. I smiled at him, wondering if I had made a new friend. He smiled back, but there was something different about his smile. Everyone had sat down at that point, and the teacher got out a clipboard. She said that these were going to be our assigned seats from then on, and wrote our names down in the proper spot. As she did this, I finally noticed that there was one child that had yet to choose a seat. He stood in the middle of the tables, looking at the floor, then glanced up and met my eyes. It was that same frightening boy, and to my dismay, he began to walk in the direction of my table. To further my distress, he took the seat directly next to mine, then dropped his eyes to the table. The teacher came around to our table, and said our names out loud as she wrote them down.

"Francis, Tino, and Berwald." She said quietly, writing them down and making them final. I wished to raise an objection, but was too scared to do so. She left us to retrieve a stack of papers from her desk, then handed us each a coloring page. She told us to color it however we liked, and then to write our names on it. This I was excited for. I love to color, even to this

day. (Granted, I moved on to bigger and better things than Crayons...) I reached for the crayons enthusiastically, taking a box and opening it immediately.

I'm gonna spare you the details. All you need to know was that I colored that picture, and it looked damn good. I colored perfectly in the lines, and wrote my name as best I could on the top corner. Sure, It looked like some scribbles, but I figured my coloring skills vastly made up for my writing ones. I put the crayons back in the box, and raised my hand, as I had seen others do. The teacher came to my side, and smiled at my picture.

"That's great Tino! You're very good at coloring! But could you write your name on it for me, that way we know it's yours?" I gave her a confused look.

"I did write my name. It's right there." I said, pointing to the scribbles. She looked at them carefully, then did her best to give me a smile.

"Alright Tino, That's a really good try. We'll work on your letters, alright? I'll write your name over here for you." She replied, pulling out a crayon and writing my name in a neat scrawl in the opposite corner before taking it with her and hanging it up on a bulletin board with several others.

I was incredibly embarrassed by all of this. All of the other children were able to write their names on their paper, singling me out as the only one incapable. My face was warm, and I looked down at my hands in my lap, waiting as the other kids finished. I noticed out of my peripheral vision that the scary boy, Berwald, had raised his hand. The teacher came to his side, and reached down to take his picture, but stopped.

"Berwald, I asked you to color it. You did a very good job writing your name, but don't you want to make the picture pretty?" I glanced over, and saw that the paper was still black and white, the only color being a few letters at the top. The boy looked at his own picture, then shook his head.

"No. D'n't want t'." It took me a while to figure out what he had said, realising for the first time that he sounded odd when speaking. The teacher gave him a worried glance.

"Are you sure, Berwald?" She asked once more, and he nodded in response. "Alright, I'll go hang it up." She said as she walked away and stapled it up next to mine.

(I didn't notice it then, but thinking back on it, it had to be fate. I could color, but not write, and he could write, but not color. Fate is such a sick bitch sometimes...)

After everyone was done, the teacher announced that it was time for recess. When she got odd looks, she explained that we would all go outside and play on the playground. After learning what it was, we were all very eager to partake in this 'recess', and lined up at the door, as we were instructed to do. I began towards the beginning of the line, but several of the other children cut in front of me, and I was eventually pushed to the back of the line. Though I objected to this, I was too scared to bring it up with any of the others. And, yep, you guessed it, Mr. Scary himself got in line right after me, though he seemed reluctant to leave the classroom.

The teacher checked to make sure that we were all in line, then led us out the doors to the playground. My school had separate playgrounds for the Kindergarten thru second grades, and then all of the older kids got to play on the big playground. That was okay though, we were pleased to have a playground at all. Once there, my young eyes glanced around in wonder, taking in the seemingly wide arsenal of equipment available to us.

The whole thing was situated at the bottom of a large hill, and was completely fenced off from the rest of the school. We were told that we could play on the hill as well, and some of us did, though there wasn't much to do there, in my opinion.

There was a long row of wooden swings, ten of them for those who care enough to wonder. Next to that was a slide that seemed monstrous to our small forms, but now is only as tall as I

am. (Just as a side note, I am currently 5' 6.5". Yes, that half and inch is very important.) There was a basketball hoop, or rather, a modified version of one. It was more like a big plastic basket that had four holes, and the goal was to throw it up and into the top, then the ball would fall through one of the holes. Next to this was a big box that contained several types of balls, basket, dodge, kick, soccer, etc. As well as hula-hoops and jump-ropes. There was a monkey dome, with what seemed like hundreds of bars to climb and hang from. There was an ancient seesaw that required at least five children on each side to make it move, and was, thankfully, large enough to hold all ten of those children. A firetruck-like structure was centered behind the swings. It was made of metal bars and had wooden platforms to stand on, as well as a pole to slide down in the back. And, finally, there was a sandbox, which immediately took to my fancy.

After we had gotten a chance to take it all in, we all bolted for the things that had caught our eyes. I ran to the sandbox, and can proudly say that I was the first one there. I grabbed a shovel and a bucket, which were available in the sand, and started filling it up. No, I didn't really have a plan, I was just filling the bucket. I was soon joined by three other children. I noticed that one of them was the blonde boy from my table, Francis. Not minding them, I continued filling my bucket.

When I felt that the sand was adequately packed into the small bucket, I looked around, trying to decide where I was going to put my castle, for that is what I had decided to make. (I was five! What do you want from me?) To my delight, I found the perfect spot, close to the right hand corner where I was sitting. But when I had glanced around, I had noticed that Berwald had come to the sandbox as well. I was worried, not really sure why. He just looked so angry. I wondered if he wanted the spot that I had chosen, and was contemplating that, when Francis came up to me, shovel in hand. I looked up at him, then offered a smile, but it wasn't returned.

"Give me that bucket." He snapped, pointing at my still sand-filled bucket. I looked at it, then back at him. I didn't quite understand, so I shook my head no. I had gotten to it first, after all, so it was rightfully mine. To this, he bent down, getting close to my face.

"Give it to me, or else I'll hurt you." My eyes widened, but I still didn't understand. I had never been threatened before. I wondered if he was playing a game, and then assumed that that was the case. I shook my head once again, and his expression changed to one of annoyance. Before I could register what was happening, I had a face-full of sand. It was in my mouth, and to my horror, my eyes. It took me a moment to register the stinging before I started to cry. Unfortunately, the teacher was too busy patching up a kid that had fallen off of a swing to notice what had conspired. While I was trying to wipe the sand from my eyes, Francis kicked my bucket over, spilling the sand over my lap.

"Be quiet! Dumb crybaby! And you can't even write!" Some of the other boys laughed at me after he said this. I was still rubbing at my eyes desperately, and barely managed to see that the scary boy was approaching me. I shrunk away, scared that he meant to throw sand at me too.

To my utter shock, he got in front of me, facing Francis, and glared at him.

"Leave 'im 'lone." He said, sounding very calm, but still intimidating. Francis, very surprised, took a step backwards. I can't really blame him for that, considering how tall and scary looking Berwald was. With only one glance back at me, he quickly trotted back to his spot in the sand. I watched in shock through my hands, which were still attempting to clear my eyes, but that soon turned to horror though, as the terrifying boy approached. I flinched away, trying to decide if I should run from him, but found it to be too late. He bent down so that he was eye level with me.

“Ya 'kay?” He asked quietly as he pulled my hands from my eyes to inspect them. Though I flinched initially, I realised what he was asking. I shook my head, still crying from the sand that refused to leave my eyes.

“It hurts!” I whined, still unsure what he was going to do to me. He, to my surprise, took a small handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped my eyes with it. Though I was worried that he would hurt me, I found that he was very gentle, and barely touched me at all. Once he pulled it back, I found I could open my eyes without the stinging sensation that the sand had created. He proceeded to wipe away the tears that had been going down my face, then put the cloth back in his pocket.

“B'tter?” He asked, still very quiet. I nodded, then smiled hesitantly. He gave a short nod, then went to go sit back on the edge of the sandbox, where he had been previously. I watched as he went, then looked down at my lap, my sand covered lap. My eyes were then drawn to the now empty bucket, and finally back up to the boy.

At this point, I took a huge leap of faith. I had decided that he didn't intend on eating me, and therefore was slightly less terrifying than I had initially believed. With one last glance, I sighed, and stood, brushing the sand from my pants. I walked over to him, bucket in hand, and stood before him. He looked up at me, and I nearly lost my nerve under the glare, but managed to keep to my goal.

“U-um... Do you want to play too?” I asked shyly, displaying the bucket. He looked at it, then back up at me. After staring for a while, he nodded, and stood. I tried my best to smile, and he followed me back to my spot.

“I-I was making a castle...” Again, he nodded, and grabbed a nearby shovel. He began refilling the bucket, and I joined him after watching, transfixed for a bit. With two kids filling it up, the bucket was quickly full. I grabbed it, intending to dump it out on the ground, but the boy stopped me.

“‘f ya do that, t'll all fall 'ut. G'tta do 't fast.” He said. I looked at him, then handed the bucket to him.

“Okay. Show me how.” I replied. And he did, quickly turning it and planting it on the sand. He waited a few seconds before lifting it, and to my delight it was in exactly the same shape as the bucket. Never had I seen such a perfect mound. I took the initiative to refill the bucket, and had it about halfway, when the boy grabbed my attention.

“‘ll do th's. Ya go an' find s'me st'ff ta put 'n 't.” I took a moment to decipher that, then nodded in agreement, getting up to retrieve decorations. I searched all around, even on the hill, and returned to find four mounds perfectly arranged around one another, and then a fifth on top of them.

“Oh, wow! That's so cool! Oh, right, I got stuff.” I said sheepishly, holding out the things I had collected. This consisted of a few sticks, some leaves, some spiky seed-balls from a sweet gum tree, a handful of woodchips, and some plastic beads I found near the door. He looked at them, and nodded. “‘m all d'ne, so ya sh'd p't those 'n.” I nodded, smiling as I went to work. I placed everything right where I knew, in my soul, it was meant to go. After I finished, I stepped back to admire our work, and he was right behind me. We both looked at it, proud of our accomplishment.

“Pr'tty.” He stated quietly, and I couldn't help but giggle in agreement.

Our teacher blew the whistle then, calling us back into a line, and directed us inside. This time I gladly took my spot at the back with Berwald.

Once we were inside, we were told to go back to our seats, because we were going to do a partner activity. I looked around at my table-mates, and immediately decided I would be partners with Berwald. Yes, he still scared me, but at least he didn't throw sand at me. That

left Francis alone, and he was made to go sit at another table, to pair up with another boy. After we all paired up, she told us that we were going to take turns counting. One of us would say one, then the other would say two, and so on.

I wasn't excited in the least. The only thing I was worse at than writing was using numbers. To this day I struggle in math, and no amount of tutoring can help me.

Anyway, she told us to go, and I decided to start us off.

"One." I counted, proud of my accomplishment. Berwald looked at me, then responded lowly.

"T'o" I gave him a smile, and tried to remember the next one.

"T-Three?" It was more of a question than a statement.

"F'ur." And I froze. I didn't know the next one.

"U-Um... Seven?" I tried, and he looked at me, looking slightly less scary.

"F've." He corrected, and I blushed.

"F-five."

"S'x"

"S-Seven?"

"E'ht."

"Two." And again he paused, and looked at me.

"N'ne. We 'ready did t'o" My face heated again.

"Nine." I tried, and he continued as if I hadn't messed up.

"T'n." I lost interest then, and decided to change the subject.

"Why do you talk funny?" I deadpanned, not knowing how rude the question truly was. He looked at me, his eyes a little wider than normal, then looked away.

"'m sw'dish. M' Ma 'n Pa t'l'k l'ke th's too." He offered. I wasn't sure what exactly 'Sw'dish was, so I inquired.

"Su-e-dish? What's that?" I asked quietly, trying not to attract attention to us, considering we weren't doing what we were supposed to.

"Swedish." He managed to say clearly. "'t me'ns 'm from Sw'den. 's a co'ntry." He tried to explain. I nodded, thinking I understood.

"So you're Su-e-dish, and from Su-e-din? Oh, that's like me! I'm Finnish, and from Finland! That's why my name is Tino, cause that's Finnish!" I rambled. How I managed to avoid getting caught, I'll never know.

"'m Berwald. 'at's Sw'dish." He replied. My face scrunched up in distaste.

"Berwald... That's a weird name. It's hard to say..." I commented, thinking to myself. Then I got an idea.

"Ah, I know! I'll call you Su, cause you're Su-e-dish!" I exclaimed happily. But as I said it, I decided I didn't like the way it sounded. "Hmm... It's too short... Oh, what about Su-San? The people in that movie I watched called each other San! Yeah! Su-San!" I finished, proud of my nicknaming abilities. He didn't seem displeased by his nickname, though his face got a little red.

"'l'igh' th'n 'll call ya Fin, ca'se 'ur Finn'sh." He decided, and I quickly agreed, liking the sound of that.

"Okay! We have new names, so now we're friends, right?" I asked, as this seemed true in all of the movies I had seen. He hesitated, but then nodded.

"Ja."

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

With Su-San's help, I managed to survive kindergarten. (And yes, Our nicknames stuck. I STILL call him Su-San.) Granted, I was miserable if he was ever absent, as all of the bullies saved everything up for those days, then released it on me in an unfiltered flood of hellfire and pain. But it was incredibly rare for him to be absent. He actually had a fight with the teacher once because of it. He came to school mortifyingly sick, and threw up in the toilet. She insisted that he go home, as was regulation. Su-San tried to convince her to let him stay, as he was feeling better, and would do more good IN class than OUT of it. She, of course, sent him home.

But, all in all, He got me through that first year of school. Which is why, when my teacher told us that we would stay with the same class mates throughout elementary school, unless the principle objected, I was overjoyed. Sure, I was stuck with Francis, who was my own little five-year-old hell, but it also meant I had Su-San to protect me from him, and any other bullies I would encounter. Yeah, that's a bad plan, I know, but I must say, it worked. All throughout my six years of elementary school, and, as luck would manage to have it, My middle school years as well.

I had gotten so used to Su-San, I just couldn't imagine life without him. I began to develop the skills necessary for reading his emotions. (This I am immensely proud of! I learned that a mere eyebrow twitch can mean extreme joy! (Believe me, it took several years to decipher the small amount that I have!)) We had sleepovers, we would go hang out together, we shared food. If one of us went on a trip somewhere, they took the other with them. We talked about any and EVERYthing. (Well... I talked, he listened and offered small sounds. It's pretty rare to hear Su-San talk...) Basically, if you look 'best friends' up in the dictionary, you'll find a picture of the two of us, failing at eating Smores. Well... Me failing, and him looking at me, wondering how I got more chocolate on my face than had been on the smore in the first place...

Anyway, we had a great system worked out. I was his best(and now that I think about it, ONLY) friend, and he was my bodyguard. I seem to have a sign, invisible to me, but not to everyone else in the world, that says, in HUGE block letters 'PLEASE BEAT ME UP FOR I AM PATHETIC AND VULNERABLE'. And I just can't seem to get that thing removed. So, when one of the many bullies I had came up to, well, bully me, There was Su-San, ready to lay the hurt on them should they try anything.

Now we finally get to the good stuff. I had talked about falling in love, and how much it sucked, right? Well, now we get to go back to that.

At the end of seventh grade, after several in-class chats and hallway/lunch conversations, as many young teens are, I was curious about my sexuality. Most people are under the impression that they are straight until the experiment. That's when you start getting the other population, the so-called "Homo's and Bisexuals." I was no exception.

I had never truly paid attention to either genders. Truthfully, my world didn't revolve around much, other than My family and Su-San. So I tried taking a look around. From what I had heard, I should get excited and giddy when I looked at girls, and get jealous if there was another guy around them, and I shouldn't be affected by guys. And, to my distress, I found

that I didn't that feeling. Girls were just... Well, just more people. I didn't really see them any differently than guys. Both genders were simply people to converse with. I guessed that maybe I wasn't old enough to understand this whole "Liking and Loving" thing. I was a year younger than everyone after all. I left it at that for a while, until, that is, Su-San got a love letter.

Being best friends and all, he brought it to me the night he got it, on a Friday. (He was staying the night.) He opened it up, and handed it to me to read. I did so, and though I couldn't place it at the time, it felt like my chest got tighter all of a sudden, and it was harder to breath. I felt almost angry, which is VERY difficult for me. It was written in a neat, fancy-looking scrawl, and it was explaining how 'head-over-heels' this girl was for Su-San. My nose crinkled in disgust at the flowery scent wafting from the page. I never did like floral perfumes...

After he was sure I had read the offending letter, Su-San asked me my opinion.

"Wh't sh'ld ah do?" He questioned me lowly. Though I tried hard not to be a complete bitch about it, it kind of slipped out before I could think.

"I don't think this is a fair letter. She's not even in our class, so how does she know that she likes you? Do you even know this girl?" To this he shook his head.

"Then I would tell her no. You don't know her, and she doesn't know you." I stated, only then realising how mean I had sounded. But he nodded in agreement, and put it on his desk. It was forgotten for the rest of the night, obscured by movies and junk-food.

That Monday, Su-San turned the girl down. I was nearby, watching. The girl cried and ran off. No one else but me could tell, but Su-San felt guilty about it. I, on the other hand, was immensely pleased. I couldn't tell you why at that point, but my chest swelled, and I felt on top of the world.

But it didn't last long. Another girl tried. She came right up to him, in the middle of lunch, and asked him out. I had heard of her, and knew she was used to getting her way. I nearly hit her when she came up and told Su-San that she wanted to go to dinner. That, however, turned out not to be unnecessary, as Su-San rejected her as well, to her utter surprise. I felt almost victorious. She left in a huff, stomping back to her table. Su-San turned to me, his face shifting to one of concern, or his face's interpretation of concern.

"wh's the m'tter Fin? 'ur face's red." He pointed out, causing me to blush further. I hadn't noticed that my face had heated up until then.

"Ah, um... Nothing, just a bit warm..." I offered quietly. He didn't believe me, and I know he didn't. He knows I know he didn't. But he let it slide.

"k. T'll me 'f som'thin's wr'ng." He replied, just as quietly. I nodded.

I suppose that's when I finally put two and two together. Expanding on the emotions, and the fact that I really wasn't close to anyone else, I decided that I liked Su-San. It seems too simple, but it's the truth. Let it just be said that I really thought about it. Hours into the night would find me still contemplating my feelings. I even made a bit of a mental checklist.

I definitely had the jealousy thing down. I mean, wanting to punch a girl just for breathing near Su-San made that VERY obvious. Now that I was paying attention, I noticed little things, like the way that Su-San dressed, and the way things hugged his body, and I had the excitement checked off too. To put it simply for you, I decided, in the span of a two weeks, that I liked my best friend, that we were meant to be together, and that no one was going to get in the way of that.

But, as I have said before, I'm not known for my massive amounts of confidence. I never told him. I was too scared to even think about it. And then, as if trying to contradict me, fate got in the way.

Su-San's mother had to move for her job. No Su-San's mom, no Su-San. It was a pretty

abrupt thing. We found out only a month before he was to leave.

Needless to say, that was a very depressing month for me. Well, both of us, really, but Su-San was better at hiding it. When he told me, I broke into tears and cried into his shirt for nearly an hour. I was so confused and miserable, I just couldn't process the thought that there wasn't going to be a Su-San in my life anymore. We were out of school at that point, and we spent every second of it together. Literally. We had a month-long sleepoverfest. I was either at his house, or he was at mine, and no one could separate us. We went out and repeated everything we had done, Walking through parks, playing at the arcade, Wading in rivers, going to every place that had some sort of memory attached to it.

That month seemed to last less than a day for me. Each day was a mere minute, and each week only an hour. I wished, so desperately, that I would wake up, and laugh at myself for ever having dreamed up such a thing.

But that didn't happen. I woke up on the last day, drove with Su-San to the airport, and watched as he got on the airplane that was separating us forever. He hadn't even gotten to the entrance before I started bawling like the baby I am. He watched me, and it was actually obvious how sad he was. His brows were drawn up, making him look much like a kicked puppy. Had I not been in the process of losing my best friend, I probably would have marveled at the never-before-seen expression. But I was. He stayed until the last moment, only boarding the plane once the announcer had said that his flight was about to leave. I could have killed that woman, had I known where she was.

My mom barely managed to drag me out of the airport, and I was sobbing the whole way. She nearly took me to the doctor because the sobbing made it hard for me to breath.

.-.-.-.-.+.-.-.-.-.-.

Well, I'm going to spare you the details of the next three years of my life. Let's just Sum it up to:

I was Depressed. Massively. I had to take pills for a year.

I was black and blue. I had no bodyguard anymore, so I was a sitting duck.

I was lonely. I had no other close friends.

I was desperate. Every time I got a call, I was ecstatic.

I was hopeful. I fantasized that Su-San would come back for me in a few years.

That's the gist of it. Get it? Got it? Good.

Well, the only positive on that list is currently being ripped from my hands and trampled upon by that bitch we call fate. This happens to be the second time she's fucked with me, and I am not pleased.

.-.-.-.-.+.-.-.-.-.-.

Finally, we're caught up to the present. Just so we're up to speed, I am currently Sixteen, and soon to be in my Junior year of high school.

So, I'm in a terrible situation. My mother has decided that we are going to move. No, mom, that is not okay. The last little shred of positive in my life is dead now. Should Su-San actually come back for me now, I wouldn't BE there. Then he'd just shrug, go home, and get married to an ugly girl. No, I am most definitely NOT okay with that.

But, if you've ever moved, you know how much of a choice you get in it. Which is none. So there I was, packing up my bags, trying not to glare holes into the boxes lined up against the wall, and just barely managing. I was putting my clothes into my suitcase, my last thing to do

before we left this house for good. After I finished, I took a few steps back, and gave my room one last look-over. This was the last time I was going to see it.

I'm not going to lie, I cried a bit. My room was the last thing I had left of me and Su-San. All of my memories had gathered up here, at least they seemed to to me. For me, leaving this house was the hypothetical death of everything that had been my life up until that point. All of the secrets shared, all of the shared emotions, all of the love, all of everything was going to be left behind.

My mom called me downstairs, so I didn't get the time to make it too much more depressing. I said goodbye to it, knowing how dumb I looked and not caring. I then Wiped my eyes, and grabbed my bags.

As we drove through town, I had to force myself not to cry. Passing the familiar landmarks brought up so many emotions for me, and I'm surprised that I wasn't rendered a sniveling mess. Going through the airport, and boarding on the same platform as Su-San had, I had to wipe the rebel tears from my cheeks. When we took off, I was crying. I couldn't stop it, they just started pouring out. I managed to choke down the sobs, but my shirt was soaked when I finally ran out of tears.

I then proceeded to take a nap. I slept for the rest of the flight, and woke up to a dark sky and a lot of noise. I looked around in a daze, not sure what to make of the situation with my sleep-fogged mind. My mom tapped my arm, and told me we had landed, and it was time to get off. After processing that, I managed to get up and pull my bags from the overhead compartment, and shuffle out into the aisle. My mother was right behind me, and we got off of the plane together.

Though it was late, the airport was bustling with activity. Everywhere we looked there were people bustling about, trying to find their platforms, getting off of them, or searching for people who had gotten off of them. Still groggy, I had to let my mom lead me around by the arm. Any other day and I would have objected, claiming that my masculinity would be called into question, but I was too drowsy to even think of thinking. She brought me to a little cafe and bought us both something to eat. I THINK I ate a cheese danish, but I'm not quite sure. Like I said, I was out of it. After we ate, she lead me out of the airport, and into a taxi, which took us to a hotel. She pulled me into a room, and I immediately dropped onto the bed. I heard her start the water for a shower, and then I was out like a light.

Luckily, I rested well, Because as soon as I was up and out of the shower, we were off to move in to our new house. My mother had bought it a week before we moved in, so we technically could have slept there the night before, but chose hotel beds as opposed to the floor. The moving truck was already there when we arrived. I took a moment to take in what was to be my home for the rest of the time I spent with my mother.

It actually wasn't too bad, even I had to admit. It was bigger than our last one, and much newer looking. It had a new coat of paint, and the roof had no damage. The garden that wrapped around the base of the porch was well kempt and bright. The design was a cross between Victorian and Colonial styles, with large, three wide windows. Overall, had I not been morbidly depressed, I would have been quite pleased. But I was, so I wasn't.

I sighed, and jumped up into the truck that held all of our furniture and boxes. I began lugging boxes in, leaving the heavy furniture to the movers. I had only really planned on carting my boxes in, but found them buried underneath the mass of other boxes containing all of the other household items. Groaning, I grabbed two of them, and somehow managed to get them into the house. Needless to say, I am very wimpy, but hey, what can I do? I can't gain ANY muscle, no matter what I do, so back off.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry, I know, it should be longer. But this was the best place for me to leave off before the next chapter. Big things are going to be happening next chapter, so I didn't want to spoil it. I have a massive headache at the moment. UGH. But, on the bright side, I'm nearly out of school! Only one more week of classes, and then finals, and then I AM DONE! GOODBYE SOPHOMORE YEAR! But then I go to summer school right after my birthday... And I'm gonna have a job then too... Well, wish me luck! Also, thanks for the great reviews, and just know that they are my CRACK. I am addicted! I unfortunately don't have time to reply to them all personally, but I do read and appreciate them all! Anywho, I think I might have forgotten the disclaimer last time, so yeah... I don't own these characters, like, any of them. But the story's mine.

(I WAS SO YOUNG WHEN I STARTED THIS OMFG (I've since graduated highschool!))

KuroRiya
九六りや

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Okay, so we all remember how I was struggling with those two boxes, yes? Okay, good. Well, I got pretty cocky after my fifth trip, cause I had yet to need a break. I hadn't even dropped them yet! So, as most cocky male teenagers will do, I tried to push myself even more. I grabbed three. Big mistake.

I should have known just by how hard they were to pick up. But, again, Cocky male teens don't tend to think too straight. I wobbled out, and even managed to get out of the truck. Or rather, I thought I had. I managed to trip at the last minute, my foot catching on a strap that was hanging carelessly from the truck. I would have toppled to my imminent doom, and broken the contents of the boxes, had someone not caught both the boxes and myself.

I was still in a state of panic, my eyes shut tight and waiting for painful impact. After a few seconds with the absence of this expected pain, I opened them, and blinked stupidly. I then realised that someone had grabbed me around the waist, and was holding me up while supporting the balance of the boxes I still had in my hands. I gasped, and flushed, straightening up immediately. I tried to offer a rushed apology.

"I-I'm sorry! I shouldn't have tried to take so many at once!" I put the boxes on the ground, wanting to get a good look at my savior. It's probably a good thing that I put them down, or else I would have dropped them when I saw my "savior".

Incredibly tall, with shortly cropped blonde hair and square glasses, and a glare that could scare the best out of any man on earth. I think his bright blue eyes widened at the same time that mine did, but they couldn't be nearly as wide, nor as moist.

"S-Su-San?" I could barely believe that I even got the opportunity to ask that simple question.

"Mah G'd." He mumbled in disbelief. Honestly, I couldn't blame him, I couldn't really believe it myself. It took me a moment to register exactly what was happening. (I'm sure that you're pretty surprised too.) But as soon as I did, I was running. No, not away. I ran full speed at him, tackling him with a ferocity that I didn't even know I possessed.

Granted, it did little to affect the giant, considering I was practically half his size. He made a little 'omph' sound, but that was it. And I hugged the life out of him, sobbing like the baby I am. I can't even describe to you how wonderful it felt to be wrapped up in those huge arms again, breathing in the Su-San scent with every breath.

"s it re'llly y'u Fin? I..." I smiled, still crying, but nodded into his chest, which was much broader than I remembered.

"Yes! It's me! Oh my god, I missed you so much! What are you doing here Su-San? Oh god..."

"Ah L've 'ere. W'll, n'xt door. Th't un." He said, loosening up on me and pointing to the house right next to mine. I sobbed. "C'me ta see if yah n'eded 'ny h'lp."

"Are you kidding? Oh god, if this is a dream I am going to be SO pissed! Oh god, how on earth..? Su-San... You got so tall! And your voice is all different!" Was all I could think to spit out. He offered a rare little twitch of his mouth. Oh, how I missed that little movement that was always saved just for me.

"M'ybe ya j'st shr'nk." I glared, not at all pleased with that. I was sensitive about my height.

"I did not!" I spat, faking my annoyance, and his lips twitched again.

"J'st kidd'n. Ah m'ssed ya, Fin." I got another tight squeeze to accentuate that.

Um, so yeah, lot's of ooey gooey mushy stuff. I couldn't help it! I was so so so happy! And the goo would have continued, had my mom not decided to come out for more boxes at that precise moment.

Now, try to imagine this from my mom's point of view for a moment. A VERY tall man (He's almost six foot!) has your only son, (Who is nearly a head shorter than the tall one) in a very tight hold, and your son is crying profusely. What do you put together in your mind? For most, the answer is one of two things. Assault, or rape, which is precisely what my mom perceived.

There fore, when I turned a bit, to my horror, my mother was launching herself at Su-San, looking ready to tear him to pieces with her intimidating nails of doom. And, unfortunately for me, there was absolutely nothing I could do to stop it. So, with dread in my heart, I already began to spit out the words that would hopefully stop the attack.

"M-Mom, no! Please, this isn't a rapist! It's Su-San!" Alas, I was too late. She had tackled him from behind, and had her arms around his throat. I watched as Su-San's eyes widened a fraction, but he was otherwise unaffected. He did, however, tighten his hold around me.

Thankfully, my mom realised her mistake, and didn't continue her attack, though she was dangling from his neck, being only an inch taller than I am. Slowly, she detached herself, and put her feet on the ground. I was released, and she came around to the other side of Su-San, looking him over. Her face then brightened considerably as she realised I had told the truth.

"Berwald! What are you doing here!?" I groaned in embarrassment, my face taking on a blush in my mother's place.

"He lives next door. Though you've probably scared him out of ever coming over again!" I explained, exasperated. She chuckled, and Su-San turned to me.

"N'thin's g'nnn k'ep m' fr'm se'in ya." He said firmly, and my mother gave a full laugh.

"See Tino? He loves you too much! He's put up with me since you two were kids, I don't think there's anything he hasn't seen. But my goodness, how long has it been? Three years already?" We both nodded, a pain flaring in my chest at the mere mention. "And what were the odds? Out of all the places... Quite the coincidence, hmm?" Su-San nodded, but I did not. There was no way in hell that this was a coincidence! FATE! Fate brought me back to Su-San! And I'll be damned if it's ever separating us again! I'd even opt to stop calling it a bitch if it would get us together!

And then I remembered. Su-San. The object of my affections. Was here. In front of me. Living next to me. AHHHHHHHH!

Su-San looked at me oddly, and I realised that I must have been making faces while I thought, and blushed. Oh well, at least he can't read thoughts... I hope.

"Ah c'me t' see if ya ne'd help." He tried, not wanting the conversation to become awkward. My mother shook her head immediately.

"No. The movers will handle it, that's what I paid them for. Why don't you two go catch up! I bet you're dying to! Go on!" She dismissed, making shooing motions. We obeyed, Su-San nodding his head towards his house. I followed obediently, still trying to catch my brain up to current events, and having trouble. Never in my wildest dreams had I even imagined that life would work out so perfectly. I had actually contemplated pinching myself to make sure I was actually conscious, but saved myself the embarrassment. Besides, if this was a dream, it was a pretty damn good one.

He took me to the front door, then turned to me before opening it.

"Mah ma's h'me." He informed me, to my utter confusion.

“Um... Okay?” I offered, unsure if it was a question or statement. The former seemed more likely.

“H'sn't s'en ya in thr'e ye'rs.” Then I got what he was trying to say. I had better take a very deep breath before I entered. I nodded, confirming the unspoken question that I was ready. He opened the door, and all was calm.

“Berwald? Yer b'ck alre'dy? Did ya go ov'r ta the ne'ghb...Oh mah w'rd! Is th't Tino?” He offered a brief nod, and then my world went dark. I couldn't breath, move, or see.

“Oh mah! Ah h'ven't se'n ya in so l'ng! H's mah l'il Tino?” She inquired, still crushing me in a hug of death. I managed to push away enough to answer.

“I'm good Ms. Oxenstierna. A bit out of sorts, but good.” I replied, giving her a lazy smile. She grinned down at me, obviously very pleased to see me.

“It's so g'od tah se' ya! Ya g't so pr'tty! Wot'cha d'in here?” From anyone else, I would have been insulted, twice. First, the pretty comment. I'M A BOY DAMMIT! But Ms. Oxenstierna has always called me her “Pretty little son”. Su-San is her “Quiet big son”. So I've grown accustomed to it. The second would be the “What are you doing here”. Though it sounded harsh, I knew she meant it with love. She's quite the woman, honestly.

“I just moved in next door, so we're neighbors, apparently.” I told her, and watched as pleasure covered her face.

“s L'ila th're?” She asked, and I nodded. (Just so we know, my mom's name is Laila.) She grinned, and released me immediately.

“W'll th'n, a'll be g'in ta se' h'r.” And with that, she was off, leaving me alone with Su-San. We both watched her as she left, silent.

“So, um... What should we do? My mom said to catch up, but nothing has really happened to me since you left. Well... I guess I got beat up, but other than that...” I tried, then realised my mistake. His head snapped quickly, startling me with a glare.

“Th'y hurt ya?” I tried to play it off with a grin, failing miserably.

“Ah, well, you know how people are, and it's me after all! So, I mean... They never did anything awful. The worst was getting my head shoved in a toilet... Or maybe it was getting my lunch thrown at me... Well, anyway, just a bunch of cliché stuff, and it really isn't anything to worry about! Besides, I moved, so... Um...” Yes. I clearly have skills.

He looked even angrier then, his glare becoming a true one. Nice cover on my part, I know.

“Who? Who h'rt ya?” I withered a bit under the glare, not really wanting to answer the question.

“Um... A lot of people... No one really in particular...” He turned to me fully, coming closer and looking me straight in the eyes.

“Who h'rt ya?” He demanded, and my resolve cracked. What? He's an intimidating guy when he wants to be...Or rather, he's always intimidating...

“I-I... Um...Well.. F-Francis, mostly...” I stuttered. He growled, much to my surprise.

“Ah sho'd kick 'is g'rly li'l ass...” To that, my eyes widened. I had never heard Su-San cuss. I mean, I usually don't do it myself. At least not out loud.

“U-um, no you shouldn't? I mean, I already left, so, um... It's okay now.” I tried, wanting to consul his obvious anger. He shook his head.

“No. 's not 'kay. He h'rt ya!”

“But it's already done. There isn't any point. Come on, Su-San! Let's leave that in the past! I'm here now! Let's talk about something good, okay? I mean, I still can't believe that you're here... And I'm here and... Oh my god...” Would you believe me if I said that I started crying again? Because I did. It finally dawned on me the severity of the situation.

I was finally being reunited with the best friend that I had missed so much, and whom I was

head-over-heels in love with. Though it probably seems fast to you, since I skipped out on giving you EVERY detail of my life, I had known this boy for ten years. And I had been missing him for three of those. And now, somehow, I was with him again. I was in his house, which was right next to mine. We'd be going to school together again. We could see each other everyday. I could hear his voice, everyday. I could finally be with him, not have to dream about him. It was just so abrupt, how suddenly my life took a turn for the MUCH MUCH better.

He seemed startled for a moment. Truly, I can't blame him. Most people don't spontaneously burst into tears. Unless they are me, apparently.

"A-are ya 'kay?" He asked me, putting an arm around my shoulder. I nodded, still sobbing pathetically.

"Y-Yeah. I just... I can't believe that you're really here! I... I really thought I was never going to see you again! And I was worried you had forgotten me! Y-you hardly called, and it just seemed like I was completely losing you, and I was so scared. And when I found out I had to move, It was even worse. I thought that if I moved I would REALLY lose you, because you would never find me, but now... I-I'm with you. I just never imagined that this could be possible! I'm sorry... I'm being a baby..." I gushed all at once. Yeah, I kind of have that tendency, especially around Su-San. I mean, he's so quite... I feel like I need to fill the silence.

"No. 'ur not be'in a baby. An' a'm sorry. Ah sho'lda called m're. A'm not v'ry go'd on the phone." He reassured, hugging me tighter. (Yes, I was enjoying this.) I smiled knowingly, for I knew the truth of that very well. The times he did call me consisted mostly of me chatting his ear off, with a few grunts of an answer from him. I rubbed at my eyes, trying in vain to rid them of moisture. He pulled out a handkerchief, and offered it to me. (May I just ask, who still carries those around? I wasn't aware that that was still something people do... I suppose Su-San is special...) I looked at it, unsure of what I was meant to do with it. He sighed, and pressed it to my face. He wiped my eyes first, then my nose. I blushed, thanking him. He stuffed it back into his pocket, then turned me so that we were facing each other.

"'kay?" He asked, and I nodded, smiling.

"Yes, thank you. Sorry..." I offered pathetically. He shook his head.

"S 'kay." He assured me, and I smiled again. I was wondering if we were going to fall into awkward silence then, but he grabbed my wrist and took me up a flight of stairs. Always a man of action, I suppose. I was led to what could not be mistaken for anything but Su-San's room. It still held all of the furniture that I was familiar with, just in a different setting. I smiled happily, and flopped down on the bed that I had missed so much. Even the comforter was exactly like I remembered it to be, soft and very thick. And it still smelled exactly like I remembered it, just like Su-San. I rolled over so that I was facing the ceiling, and caught Su-San's face out of the corner of my eye. His eyebrows were slightly raised, which told me that he was amused.

"It's just like I remember! The room is different, of course, but everything else is the same!" I commented, sitting up to look around. Su-San was sitting at his old desk, which had his lamp on it. His dresser was pushed up against the wall, next to his closet. Next to his bed was his old night stand, and I'm sure that the drawer probably contained his electronics, like it used to. The only thing in the room I didn't recognize was a picture frame that was on the night stand. Curious, I scooted closer so that I could take a look. I must say, I was worried about what it might contain... I hoped it wasn't a girlfriend.

To my surprise (and delight) I found that it was a picture of me. To be specific, it was a picture of me on the day that my mom took us to the beach. I had my hair pulled up in little

pigtails. (this was my mother's doing, not mine!) And I had the goofiest grin on my face, ice-cream in hand. My face turned red as I looked at it.

"Why do you have this awful picture? I look like a dumb girl!" I demanded, pointing at the offending photo. His eyes widened a fraction, and he came to sit next to me, taking a look at it himself.

"Cute." Was all he said, causing my blush to deepen.

"W-what? But it doesn't even look like me anymore!" I practically screeched. He shrugged.

"s the mos' r'cent 'un I 'ave." He offered. I sighed, knowing I had been beaten. I resolved to get him a better picture to put in that frame.

"Well... Um... I guess I should ask how you've been, hmm?" I asked, more to myself than to him. He looked thoughtful, then shrugged once again.

"'kay? Not m'ch new. M'ssed ya." He hugged me again, and I chuckled.

"I missed you too. But come on! Tell me what's been up with you! Any girls you like or something? I haven't seen you in so long, who knows what you've been doing!" I said, sounding lighthearted. Truth be told, I was dreading the answer. I really was. What if he said yes? What if he already had a girlfriend? What was I supposed to do then?

"No. No g'rl. Bin goin ta sch'ol. 's all." He deadpanned. That got me a bit giddy, and I giggled girlishly.

WHAT? He was single! I mean, he's straight, but hell, at least I had half of a fighting chance!

"Wha's f'nny?" He asked, and I shook my head.

"Sorry, nothing, just the way you said that. Almost like you were repulsed." I said, still giggling. He shook his head.

"re dum." I shook my head this time, smiling.

"Gotta agree with you there. I don't really like them either." I confessed.

Sounds like a great reunion, right? It was, until we both realised the position we were in. Su-San was still hugging me. And I had pretty much just told him my little secret. I mean, I didn't just go and scream "I'M GAY" at him, but I came pretty close. He let me go, and I was afraid that he was going to throw me out all together. Honestly, I wouldn't blame him if he did. Finding out your best friend is gay is... Quite the shock. I could only hope that I had been vague enough that he wouldn't catch on. Su-San is, after all, a rather dense individual.

"Ya. To' n'sy." He agreed. I nearly breathed a sigh of relief. He hadn't caught on, and I was safe, for now. I'm such a ditz. And he stayed on the bed beside me, offering no signs of discomfort.

"Yep. Hmm... How's the school here?" I asked, deliberately changing the subject. If he noticed it, he chose to ignore it.

"S'kay. Bit cr'wded, but a'right." He replied. I offered a smile.

"Oh? There are a lot of people? Well, less of a chance for bullying, I suppose." I concluded dumbly, again not realising my mistake till it was too late. He got that angry look on his face again. (This entails a slight furrowing of his eyebrows...)

"No un's g'nna h'rt ya. 'on't let em." He stated firmly, and I tried to calm his anger with a grin and a nod.

"Of course! I'm back with my little... Big... knight in shiny armor!" I assured pathetically. Though his frustration stayed a moment, his face finally softened, and he nodded.

"No un 'lse. No un's g'nna h'rt ya." He restated, then wrapped those huge arms around me again. I chuckled, thoroughly enjoying all of the attention he was giving me.

"Alright. I believe you. What else should we talk about?" I asked, not failing to notice that I was still securely in his arms.

"Ya." He replied forcefully, pulling me closer to him.

Now, before we get all freaked out and stuff, cause I almost did, remember that we haven't seen each other in three years. No, it isn't a normal occurrence for Su-San to be so... Touchy feely... But even the best of us change when faced with extreme emotional situations. That's what I'm chalking this up to. I wish I could assume otherwise, but I can't.

"Alright, me... Um... What about me? Nothing has really happened while you were gone."
"S'me thin'. G'rls? B'ys? Cl'sses? Jus talk." He commanded, and I jumped. Had he said BOYS? Did he already suspect me? Really? But who was I to Su-San some much needed social time?

"Okay... Um... No relationships... I guess classes have been okay. I had this really nasty art teacher last year though. She was pregnant, and was always really moody and mean. And all of the information she would give us to take notes on were wrong. Like, one time, she said that the Greeks built the Pyramids. I nearly yelled at her for that! I mean, that was just so, so, so wrong! And then, when she finally had her baby, she was out for a month, and we had this awesome sub! She let us do practically anything we wanted, cause we were doing mixed media, and she gave me an A on my project! But then my real teacher came back and gave us a terrible project, and she gave me a C. Then she wouldn't let me do what I wanted for my final piece, so it turned out horrible, and I hate it now! And my English teacher sucked too, now that I think about it! He would give us huge assignments, but not tell us how to do them, and if you asked for help, he'd give you this really vague speech thing that he had prepared mentally that totally DOESN'T answer your question! But other than those two, school was pretty okay last year... I'm sorry, I just ranted..." I noticed that I was pretty much in his lap at that point, as he had his nose buried in my hair. I felt it as he shook his head, and as his breath came out with his response.

"Na. Th's what ah w'nted. Ke'p talkin'." He assured me. I got a little shiver from the sudden warmth on my head and neck.

"O-Okay... Well... Lunch really sucked without you. I had to sit with the nerdy kids. I mean, yeah, I'm nerdy too, but not like that! I like video games just as much as the next guy, but my god, that's the ONLY thing they talk about! And did you know that there are actually people that play Dungeons and Dragons? I thought that was just in movies! Like, it was something they made up so they could stereotype nerds, but it really does exist! Like, they would get their cards and dice out during lunch, and they would play a HUGE game of it. And they really got into it too! Like, they would yell, and get all pumped up, and make sound effects and stuff. Sometimes I actually thought about staying in the bathroom until lunch was over! They were so scary! But I guess I got used to it... They tried to make me a character too, but I didn't let them. One kid stalked me about it for a while too! That was creepy! But he backed off after he saw Francis messing with me. And..." At that point I felt a squeeze from the arms surrounding me. Thinking, I nearly slapped myself. Why? Why can't I keep my stupid mouth shut? But, in my stupid mouth's defense, there isn't many topics in my life that don't involve my personal bully.

"Oh, Su-San, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to... Um... Anyway... The vending machines always ate my money, and um..." I tried to distract him, and failed miserably. I could tell he wasn't listening to me anymore. My mind was trying to process what I could say to make him feel better, but luckily I was saved by our mothers.

Both had come upstairs, and there was a knock at the door. We both looked at it, a little surprised that there were other people in the world. Su-San recovered first.

"Ya?" He called, granting entrance. At that point, I began to panic. I was still in his lap... But it was too late, as the door opened, revealing both of our mothers. I watched as their eyes widened at the sight of us, then both relaxed.

“Ha, looks like you two really missed each other, huh?” My mother observed, laughing. Ms. Oxenstierna nodded in agreement. “Well, anyway, we came to tell you that you could have a sleepover if you want. It's Saturday, so no school tomorrow.” I tried to look up at Su-San, but failed. However, I felt the nod. Both women smiled, then turned to go back downstairs.

“Tino, behave yourself. I don't want to hear any complaints this early on, okay?” My mom threw back. I groaned loudly, which earned me a chuckle and a goodbye. They closed the door on the way out, leaving Su-San and I alone in silence. I wasn't sure what exactly I was supposed to do, so I just sat there a while longer, trying to take in the feeling of being held, knowing that it couldn't last too much longer.

“W-Well, I guess I should go grab some clothes from home...” I tried, but he shook his head. “Can b'rrow s'me o' mine.” He informed me lowly.

“Oh... Okay...” I stuttered, still not sure what I was supposed to be getting out of this whole “hug” thing. I wanted so badly to take this as a good sign, but I just don't have the confidence to do so. We fell into a silence for a while, only broken by our breathing.

“...Ah m'ssed ya, Fin.” He repeated himself. I tried to twist and see his expression, but realised how useless that would be in the first place.

“U-Um... I missed you too?” And he gave me one last, tight squeeze. Then, all at once, he released me, waited for me to scoot away, then stood.

“Ah'll get ya s'me thin' to eat.” He said, moving towards the door. I faltered, but then smiled and stood.

“I'll come too!”

Chapter End Notes

Okie dokie, well, that was just a whole bunch of fast paced fluffy stuff all at once.... Sorry? I really only planned on this being a high school fic, that's why these first two and beginning of the third chapter are so fast paced. I only threw in the kindergarten part to explain some things, since I don't like it when characters have insta-relationships. It just bugs me... Well, anyway, it's high school from here on out. What a load of mush though! Sweden was so cuddly... Well, he hasn't seen him in a long time, so he gets an excuse... (Plus, I felt like some cuddling. I like cuddling. DON'T YOU JUDGE ME!) Anyway, since we all know that Finland is a major chatterbox, I used him to vent some of my frustrations with school. The art part was the combination of my art teacher from this and last year. The English part is MY incompetent English teacher. And the nerd kids are some of the people I know. The stalker boy was MY stalker boy. Granted, I didn't get beat up to get rid of him.

Also, please note: I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING AGAINST DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS!!!! I have a lot of friends who play it, and I'm fine with that. But I don't play it, and we all know that it is the nerd cliché! Had to use it! Hm... Nearly out of school, but don't get excited, cause I go right back for summer school credit advancement, and I have a job as of June 14, soooooooo... yeah. Also, I'm sorry that I butcher the Swedish accent... I've never really heard one... But this is what almost every other SuFin author does, so that's what I'm going to do... I'll try to make it a little less... Fail? I got a suggestion to use things like 'mah' and 'ya', so I'm trying that out... Try to

ignore my fail? Well, I don't own the characters, (Though I did make up their mom's...) so don't sue me.

So, since you have a little taste of my story now, I'd like to let anyone reading this know that I have some other accounts that are made specifically for this story (and my others.) I have an ask page on Deviantart and Tumblr, as well as a facebook page. Here are links to those if you want to check them out. I'll start posting these links in all of my notes, so they'll be there if you ever want to see what's going on there.

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Considering how early we went to our house to unpack, it was only one-o'clock. That left Su-San and I with several hours to kill before sleep was even plausible. Therefore, I suggested that he take me for a tour of the city after we ate, and he agreed. So, that's how I found myself in his dark blue car. (You should have seen my face when I found out he not only had a license, but his own car too!)

He took me into the town, which was about ten minutes from where I now lived. As we reached the first signs of civilization, he began pointing out things he deemed important. This included the mall, the Walmart (and it's opposing Hyvee, because every Walmart has one.)

The Starbucks, the Library, and we ended up in the downtown area. We circled about, searching for a parking space, just barely managing to find one. I was then instructed to get out of the car. I did so, and watched as he completely bypassed the parking meter.

"Um... Su-San, don't you have to put money in?" I asked him, pointing to the meter that corresponded with our space. He glanced at it, then shook his head.

"N't on we'kends." Was all he offered, waiting for me to join him on the sidewalk.

"Oh... so they only make you pay during the week?" To this he nodded. Once I was beside him, he began to lead me around, telling me what each shop we passed contained. We were passing a shop, and he told me that they sold old electronic things, like CDs, games, movies, etc. I asked him to go in, and he agreed.

Okay, yes, I admit it, I'm nerdy! I have a passion for music, and for watching movies, so when I walked in to find rows upon rows of just that, I was delighted. I even squealed a bit before running to the first rack I could find.

Browsing through the CDs, I found that I was very pleased with the selection. A lot of my favorite artists were being featured, and they had several foreign artists as well. Su-San stood behind me, watching my gleeful expedition through a vast amount of CDs. After I had been through more than a hundred of them, he told me that there were a lot more stores to visit.

"Oh, sorry Su-San! I got caught up! Let's go!" And I followed him out and back on to the sidewalk. We passed several more, including clothing shops, cafes, book stores, a costume shop, some restaurants, some theaters/auditoriums, a fortune telling stand, and some art galleries, which I managed to convince him to go into with me. (Art is kind of my thing. But the galleries all sucked...) Finally, there was just a single section of downtown left. He led me down it, and told me that the only thing worthwhile over here was the frozen yogurt shop. To this, I only offered a quizzical look.

"Frozen Yogurt? They have a store for that?" I asked, and he nodded.

"But... Isn't ice-cream better?" He shook his head.

"N't in mah opin'on." He replied to me quietly. I looked at the shop, decorated very colorfully, not sure what to make of it.

"Well, I guess I wouldn't know. I've only ever had ice-cream." And that was all it took. I found myself being yanked into the shop. To say the least, I was surprised. I actually yelped, and nearly fell. What? It was abrupt! All of a sudden, I was just being dragged into a store. When I was through the doors, I felt an immediate surge of air. Being the end of August, the

AC felt pretty good.

I was brought to a line, and handed a paper bowl. I looked at it, and then ahead of me.

“Um... I don't have money Su-San...” I said pathetically. He shook his head.

“Ah'll b'y it.” He said coolly. My eyes widened a bit, and I shook my head, but stopped when he gave me a little glare. Knowing I was beaten, I sighed, and moved on in the line.

“W-What do I do?” I asked, glancing at the little levers coming out of the wall.

“Pick a fl'vor.” He said, simply, and I turned back to the levers, which were apparently dispensers. There were ten flavors, and each one seemed odd to me. I went down the entire row, and finally decided on Strawberry-Banana. I looked at him, as if for assurance, then slowly pulled the little handle down, and watched in awe as the pink yogurt came pouring out. My little bowl quickly filled, and I panicked for a moment, not sure I knew how to stop the flow, but figured it out pretty quickly.

After I had completed this task, I looked to Su-San for further instruction. He urged me forward, and I found myself in front of a saladbar of toppings. Anything and everything sweet was on that bar. Chocolate bars, fruits, liquid chocolate, caramel, strawberries, nuts, mochi (I looked at that oddly...), Candy, cake batter, cookie dough, angel food cake, EVERYTHING! Su-San gestured that I was supposed to add these to my yogurt, and so, though I hesitated, I complied, opting for just some strawberries, bananas, angel-food cake pieces, and some caramel syrup. I looked to him again, and he nodded, then led me to the counter. I looked at the person behind it expectantly, but they did nothing.

“P't it up o' the sc'le.” He whispered to me. Blushing, I did so, and the person pushed some buttons, a total coming up on the register. My whole bowl came to a total of \$5.46. Su-San pulled the money out of his pocket and handed it to the cashier, then led me out, back onto the streets and brought me to a table that was outside of the store. I sat down, looking at the monstrosity in front of me with fear and awe. What!? I've never had anything that...

Overpowering before!

“D-Do I eat it now?” I asked, unsure. He nodded, and I put the spoon into it. Bringing it to my lips, I hesitated once more, still not confident that this was okay. I finally put it in my mouth, and let's just put it this way. Never had my tastebuds screamed so loudly with pleasure. My eyes got wide, and I melted into it, seeming to lose all bones in my body. I probably would have slipped into a daze of bliss, had I not heard something that is very VERY rarely heard.

Su-San chuckled.

I dropped my spoon, and snapped my eyes to his face. Hey! This is a rarity! I'm going to see it!

His face was more relaxed than usual, His brows not furrowed, and his usually frowning lips pulled into a small smile. His glaring eyes were closed, and a bit of a... Melodic? Laugh was coming out of his mouth. I stared at him hard, not even daring to blink, for fear of missing a millisecond of the event that had only happened three times before in my entire life.

This event, however, like the few before it, was very brief. He stopped, and looked at me, normal face back in place, though it was a hint quizzical.

“Wha'?” He asked me, and I realised that I must have looked rather odd just sitting and gaping at him. I blanched, then picked my spoon back out of the bowl.

“N-Nothing... It's really good?” I offered, more as a question than an answer. He gave me a hint of a smile, then nodded.

“old ya.” He said, almost matter-of-factly. I smiled, secretly reveling in the chuckle that

he seemed to have forgotten already. I ate more of it, trying to hurry for Su-San, but wanting to savor it. After I had eaten most of it, I looked up at Su-San. It dawned on me then that he hadn't gotten one.

"Oh, Su-San, I'm sorry! Do you want some? I completely forgot to ask!" I exclaimed, my face heating in embarrassment. But he shook his head.

"Ah bough' it fer ya." He stated simply. I would have argued against him, but his air of finality kept me from it. I nodded, and finished it. After I had, He stood and led me to a trashcan. I threw my bowl away, and then trailed after him as he walked to the edge of the sidewalk.

"Thanks, Su-San! That WAS better than ice-cream!" I said, grinning as we waited for our turn to cross the street. He nodded, then turned his face to look at me.

"Wha' do ya wan' ta do?" He asked, and I looked at him oddly.

"I... I dunno... I guess we could go home..." I offered weakly.

"No. 't's too ear'y." He reasoned, Gesturing for me to follow him across the street. I complied, and we continued down the sidewalk.

"But... What is there to do? I mean... we've already been through the entire downtown!... I think..." To this he nodded.

"We 'ave. We 'an go 'omewher' else." He assured. I contemplated this.

"Um.... Where could we go?" I questioned. He shrugged

"Movie?" He offered, to which I shook my head.

"I told you, I don't have any money." I re-informed. He looked like he was about to raise protest, but I quickly silenced him. "And no, you can not pay for me. You already bought me something today."

He paused, then sighed.

"Iright. Le's go home." He sounded defeated, but hey, I can't just mooch for the rest of my life!

We walked back to his car, and before I could register anything, we were halfway home. It was silent.

"Hey, Su-San?" He grunted to affirm that he was listening. "Are you mad at me?" I asked quietly. To this he turned his head to look at me.

"Wha'?" He asked, having an air of surprise about him. I flushed immediately.

"I-I just... You haven't said anything since I said no to the movies, and I.... If you really want to go we can stop by my house and I can ask for some money from Mom, and, um..." I rambled. He shook his head, turning back to the road.

"No. Ah 'anted ta make 'ure tha' ya didn' ge' bored. It was jus' a sugges'ion." He assured me. I breathed a small sigh of relief.

"Oh... I... I'm sorry. I guess I... I guess I read into it too much. Sorry..." I said, getting quieter with each word. I was surprised when he sighed.

"Don' be sorry. A' least ya had the consi'eration ta ask." He tried to comfort me. I smiled, and nodded.

"Alright, thank you, Su-San." Again, we fell into silence, but I wasn't uncomfortable this time. When we arrived at home, he led me back into his house, and then up to his room. I grinned again at the familiarity of everything, sniffing quietly to take in the scent that I had missed so much. He sat on the bed and pulled his boots off, causing me to do the same with my shoes. I plopped them down next to his, which earned me a quizzical glance.

"W'en d'ja get con'erse?" He asked, pointing to my discarded shoes.

"Hmm? Oh, I got my first pair in ninth grade, and I've got five or six pairs now.

Now that I think about it, I probably do look very different to him. I'm used to my style, but

he hasn't seen me in so long, I guess this must be pretty new to him.

I used to wear... Normal (?) stuff. Whatever my mom bought me. Some beat up jeans that I had had for a few years, T-shirts that were either too big for my mom, or too small for Su-San, and some tennis shoes.

But high school has a tendency to force you to pick a style and stick with it. Once I started, I found that I liked formfitting band T-shirts, and skinny jeans. Before people freak out and scream EMO, just know that that isn't all that I wear. I also like tank-tops, and hoody shirts, and patterned button ups, and, well, frankly I like girls clothes. Yeah, I bet that got some stares. But guys' clothes don't really fit me right. They completely flatten me out, and they don't sit where they're supposed to. If I buy mens' jeans, they are either too loose and slide down, or too tight around my hips and hurt. As much as I hate to admit it, I have a VERY feminine figure, so Men's clothes just aren't comfortable for me. I need no comments! I'm self-conscious enough as it is!

The converse were a luck kind of thing. My mother and I were hunting for School-shoes. After we hunted around the mall for hours without finding any that I liked, we came to a newer shoe store. We walked in, not really sure if we were going to like anything. But, as soon as I walked in, I fell in love. There was a rack of converse, and I instantly fell for a patterned pair, black and red and white. I went to them as fast as my legs could power walk, and looked at my mom with hope in my eyes. She sighed, and asked me how much they were. This was the make or break point. My mom refuses to pay more than thirty dollars on shoes. I turned it over, already dejected.

To my absolute wonderment, they were on sale for twenty dollars. So, that's how I got my first pair. And I still have them. They are incredibly durable, and that's how I convinced my mom to get me the other... Four... Five pairs.

Su-San nodded, still looking at me a bit oddly, before gesturing for me to follow him downstairs. He brought me to a rack, chock full of dvds.

"Oh wow... You've been collecting since the last time I saw these!" I laughed, and he nodded. He pointed to them, and I assumed I was meant to pick one.

"We going to watch a movie?" I asked, already scanning the titles. He nodded once again, and I chuckled. This is how our sleepovers usually went. I don't think that we ever made it through one without watching a movie. I finally made my selection, and pulled it out from the rack. "This one."

I had pulled out a movie called The Rocker. I hadn't seen it yet, but I had seen commercials a while back, and it looked to be a very funny movie. Su-San looked at it, then nodded.

"Funny." He stated simply, then took it from me and headed back upstairs to his room. I followed, Glancing at the pictures that lined the walls on the way up. They were mostly of Su-San and I, which made me smile. I would have to make sure and take the time to really look at them later.

Entering his room, I found that he was putting the dvd into the player on top of his medium sized TV. It was on a small table on the left side of his bed. I therefore sat on the left side of his bed. I like to be close to the TV.

After it was in, he grabbed the remote, and sat on the bed beside me, leaning back against the wall. I smiled at him, then turned my attention to the previews. Or rather, I tried to. It was hard to do so with him sitting so close. At the menu, he reached across me to aim the remote and push play. My heart skipped a beat. Yeah, I get it. Girly. Shut up. I LIKE HIM, alright? He settled back in, and the movie started.

Let me just say this, if you haven't seen this movie, and have a similar sense of humor as me, GO SEE IT! I was laughing mere five seconds in! Su-San didn't laugh, but I could tell that

even he was amused.

About a fourth of the way in, Su-San readjusted himself, stretching his long legs out on the bed. I glanced back when he did so, meeting his eyes for a second. I blushed as I turned around, not sure why.

A few minutes later, I realised that I too was uncomfortable. Despite some initial hesitance, I decided that I would stretch out too. Readjusting, I put my arm underneath my head to keep it up, and laid on my side, facing the TV.

Though I was comfortable now, I had accidentally caused a little dilemma for Su-San. Because of where my head was now, he couldn't see. (I, at the time, was completely oblivious to this.) He was faced with a choice. He had to either get his head up a bit higher, meaning he would have to get very VERY close to me, or he would have to stop watching the movie all together.

Su-San, not wanting to upset me by not participating in our activity, chose the former. Imagine my surprise when there was suddenly a body scooting closer to me, eventually pressing flush against my back, and an arm draped carelessly around my waist. Too much in shock to look back, I felt some shuffling near my head, and then everything was still. I sat in a daze for just a few more moments, then looked back in disbelief. Su-San glanced down to meet my gaze, which I'm sure must have looked incredibly quizzical.

“ouldn't see.” He explained simply, turning back to the TV. I blinked stupidly for a bit, before I realised what I was doing and returned to the movie as well. But I couldn't tell you what it was about, were you to ask me. I was too focused on the arm wrapped around me, and the small breaths that I felt on my neck every time Su-San would exhale. I don't even want to talk about the body pressed against mine.

The next thing that I was aware of, aside from Su-San, was that the movie was over, the credits rolling. I waited expectantly, expecting to be let go and for Su-San to turn the TV off. But he didn't. In fact, he didn't move at all. I looked over my shoulder, and found that his eyes were closed, and his mouth was slightly open.

I found this very odd, because Su-San NEVER fell asleep before I did. Like, in all of my years of knowing the giant, I was always the first to pass out. But here he was, his breath even and his face peaceful. I turned around, my face warm, not sure what to do. I didn't want to wake him, but...

I made my choice, reaching my hand out as far as I could without moving the rest of my body, and tried to hit the power button on the TV. I struggled with that for a bit, before finally hitting it with the very tip of my middle finger. Damn my short body, and resulting short arms!

My next challenge was to attempt removing Su-San's glasses without waking him. If you so much as breath on him when he sleeps, he stirs, so this was definitely going to be difficult. I turned as gently as I could so that I was facing him more than I was facing away, and rose my hands to his face. I pinched the frames carefully, then began to slide them down his nose. I nearly cheered when I got them off successfully, but remembered that that would defeat the purpose. So I opted to smile instead. I turned once more, and placed them on his bedside table.

I reached up, and flicked the lamp off, accomplishing the goal of darkening the room. Then I tried to relax, figuring that I would be stuck like this till Su-San woke up. I wiggled a bit to close the distance I had unconsciously created while getting ready for sleep, pressing my back against him, and sighed with pleasure. I was given an opportunity, and I was sure as hell going to take it. I shifted to fit my body perfectly to his, and then tried to keep myself awake

to enjoy the feeling. However, having stayed up late the night before, and it being past midnight, I quickly lost my consciousness.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the abrupt gap in updates, I went on a trip and just recently got back. But, to make up for it, there shall be a double update today.

For anyone hooked on my story (if there is anyone) I just want you to know that my updates are pretty hectic. You never know when another chapter will pop up. So keep an eye out!

Thanks for reading, and here are links to me on other sites:

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When I woke up, Su-San wasn't there anymore. When I yawned and stretched, I found no resistance. Looking around, I noticed his absence, and, upon looking at the bedside table to check the time, found that his glasses were gone as well. I sighed, and rolled over to the side that he had previously occupied. I smiled in pleasure when I did, finding it to be quite warm, meaning he had only just recently gotten out of bed. Being face-down, I got a huge whiff of the Su-San scent that I had missed so much, and it caused me to grin stupidly. I won't deny the fact that I was a little disappointed that I hadn't woken up in his arms, but just the thought that I was near him once again was enough to satisfy me. After relishing in the warmth for a bit longer, I decided that it no longer belonged to him, and got up. (If I were... Less intelligent, I probably would have freaked out about the never ending body heat that Su-San emits, but I'm clever enough to figure out that I was supplying it in his absence.)

As I got up, I stretched pathetically, reaching up as high as I could, and still missing the post of the bed. I remembered having trouble climbing into it the night before, and flushed. What was I supposed to do? I'm short! I've accepted it! After letting out a huge yawn, I looked down, and realised that I hadn't changed the night before. I sighed, figuring it really didn't matter. I'd been wearing these for the past two days, why not one more?

I ran my fingers through my hair, trying to comb it down into a normal style, without much success. Even if I did have a hairbrush, my major case of bedhead is untreatable in the morning. I sighed, settling for what I had managed. I gave myself one more once over, wishing that, for once, Su-San had a mirror in his room. He had never had one, ever. He said he didn't need one. Maybe he didn't, but I did!

Deciding I was decent enough, I went to the door, and opened it quietly, stepping into the dimly lit hallway. I could immediately smell bacon and eggs, and there was coffee in there somewhere. This got me excited. My mother never buys bacon, claiming I “eat it like it's endless and free” and therefore it is quite a rarity for me. Smelling it then, wafting up the staircase, I nearly drooled.

I started down the stairs, not really paying attention to much. Truth be told, I find staircases to be rather intimidating (this is due to a few too many horror films...) so I find that it is easier to go through them if I don't pay attention. Hence, my reasoning behind spacing out as I descended. Of course, clumsy Finns, staircases, and spacing out really aren't ever meant to mix. Basically, I took a topple down the stairs. Yeah, that is normal for me. Welcome to my life.

I yelped a bit as I fell, flailing in a pathetic attempt to grab something that could aid in keeping me from faceplanting. Of course, as I said before, my luck isn't so great, so I fell, almost face first, down the stairs. Had I not been mentally panicking while I went down, I probably would have marveled at how the feeling rivaled that of flying. Considering that I hadn't collided with the stairs just yet, it actually wasn't a bad experience. But the looming thought of the pain soon to come kept me from enjoying the sensation.

I closed my eyes as I neared the bottom of the stairs, the pain imminent. I felt impact, and squeaked quietly. But the impact didn't hurt like I had expected it to...

I opened my eyes cautiously, wondering if, somehow, I had been suspended in air, and would

only be released if I opened my eyes. Of course, the laws of physics kicked in, and I realised that this wasn't even possible. I found, instead of a floor with massive pools of my blood all over it, a pair of very long legs, covered by an old pair of jeans. I reasoned that those legs could only belong to one individual, considering that the pair of legs had been wearing the same jeans yesterday, and smiled sheepishly as I looked up.

"Morning Su-San! Thanks for catching me!" He nodded, setting me on my feet as he turned back to the food he was cooking.

"Ah 'eard ya com'n down. Figured somethin' was bound ta hap'en." He flipped an egg as he spoke, then turned to another pan on the stove and scrambled another.

"Am I that predictable?" I asked, sitting at the bar.

"A'ter so many ye'rs cleanin' up yer blood, yeah. Ya are." He deadpanned.

"Oh, so you only saved me so you wouldn't have to clean up?" I asked dramatically, false anguish lacing my words.

"Course." He replied, guiding the scrambled eggs onto a plate.

"Ouch, I'm hurt Su-San! Don't you want my blood stains to litter your house, just like the last one? I thought that they meant something to you!" I continued, false sorrow still in tact.

"Brings down property 'alues." He reasoned, putting bacon on each of the plates.

"I bet! They probably thought you had murdered someone, what with how many times I fell there!" I said, dropping the act. He gave me a small twitch of the lips, which in turn led me to giggle.

"Still like yer eggs 'crambled, righ'?" He asked, placing my plate in front of me. I grinned, nodding as he handed me a piece of toast with Nutella on it.

"You know me too well, I'm afraid. Thanks a bunch!" I assured, then started eating, only then realising that I was, indeed, hungry. He came around the bar, holding two mugs, and placed one in front of me before sitting down in the seat next to me.

"Ah know ya don' like coffee, but ah put lots o' milk an' sugar." He said, directing my attention to the mug. I shook my head and smiled.

"Thank you. I've actually grown a bit of a taste for it, since you left. Granted, I still don't like it very much, but I've realised how helpful it can be. Coffee got me to school several times, so we've decided it would be best to have an open relationship. Off and on, you know the type." This earned me another lip twitch, and I took a drink to hide my proud smile. That smile quickly turned into an expression of gleeful surprise.

"Oh wow! This tastes just like coffee flavored candy!" I exclaimed, taking another big drink.

"Is i' okay? Too swee'?" He asked me, sounding a bit worried.

"No, no! It's wonderful! I wish I could make coffee like this!" I grinned, attempting to reassure him. He stared at me for a moment, as if searching for the lie, then nodded and returned to his plate. I put the coffee down, its sickly sweet taste still flooding my mouth, and looked into his cup. It was a much darker color than mine, and I wondered if he had used less sweetening in his. Curious, I picked it up, and brought it to myself.

"Can I try yours?" I asked, smiling at him. His eyebrow twitched, but he nodded. I couldn't help but worry as he stared at me intently as I brought it to my lips. After getting some of the liquid in my mouth, I realised why. I nearly spit it out, right back into the mug, but managed to think better of it. My eyes watered as I panicked, frantically searching for a place to dispose of it. To my dismay, I couldn't get to the sink fast enough, and it was much too hot to keep in my mouth, so I ended up swallowing it.

"UGH! That was AWFUL! How can you drink that? Is there ANY sugar in it?" To this he shook his head, and my mouth fell open in disbelief.

"You mean you're drinking it black?" I demanded, a bit louder than I should have. He nodded

again.

“HOW?”

“Ah 'ut it in mah mouth, an' swallow.” He replied calmly. I stared at him oddly for a moment, then returned to my seat, which I had apparently left in my panic. When I sat down, I felt his hands on my face, and I nearly jumped out of my skin.

“S-Su-San?” He had moved my face so that we were making eye contact, and then wiped at my eyes with his thumbs.

“Yer eyes wer' waterin'.” He explained, then dropped his hands from my face and continued eating, as if nothing had just happened. Though a bit stunned, and excessively flushed, I too returned to eating.

Oh, how I loved bacon. And Su-San's was the very best! I was nearly finished with my plate, the only thing left to eat being my toast, when Su-San cleared his throat, bringing my attention to him.

“Um... Ah jus' wan'ed ta say sorry.” He said, quietly. I'm sure my face had to have been the picture of confusion at that point.

“Huh? For what?”

“Fer las' night. I fell a'leep.” I frowned with thought, thinking back to the night before. Then I remembered, all at once.

“O-Oh! No! It's alright! I'm sorry I kept you up so late! I guess I'm still suffering from jet lag!” I gushed, trying to assure him that he wasn't at fault. It was very minute, but I noticed that he cringed slightly when I said 'suffering'.

“Ah...Ah didn't crush ya?” He asked, his face definitely worried. My eyes widened at that, having never truly seen his face change so drastically. (well, drastically for him... not so much for other people...) After my initial shock, I burst out laughing. He seemed surprised by this, and his eyebrow quirked to show that he was questioning my actions.

“I'm s-sorry, I just... I... You... You're seriously worried about that?” I gasped out between my fits of laughter. “Honestly? After..So many.. .years of... Sleeping... together... and you....” I couldn't say anything else after that, my laughter overriding any coherency I might have attempted. I suppose that that was enough to reassure him though, as he didn't seem worried anymore. He offered me a twitch of the lips yet again, though this one was much more noticeable.

“Jus' though' ah should check.” He said simply, shrugging. I slowly regained my composure, and quickly apologized for my behavior.

“I'm sorry, Su-San! I just... We've been sharing a bed for so long, I didn't really think that that was something that you would worry about. I didn't mean to laugh at you.

“S'alright'.” He assured me, picking up my plate and taking it to the sink to wash. “Ah was jus' worried. We ha'en't slep' together fer awhile.” He explained, already putting a clean plate in the dish rack. I would have gaped at how fast he did the dishes, but I knew he had been doing them by hand since he was little.

“Still no dishwasher, hm?” I asked, clearly changing the subject from the previous topic. It was a bit too nostalgic for me. He shook his head.

“We 'ad one, but Ma broke i'.” He explained, gesturing to the counter next to him. “'aven't had time ta ge' it fixed.” To this I chuckled.

“How long did it take her to break it?”

“Less than a 'eek.”

I giggled at that, mostly because of the fact that I could clearly picture Ms. Oxenstierna doing just that. She probably overused it in excitement when they arrived.

“Oh, speaking of which, where is she?” I asked, just now noticing that she was absent.

"Shoppin'." He said in monotone, to which we both shuddered.

"And I assume she probably took my mom along with her?" I asked, dreading the answer. He nodded, and I shook my head in disapproval. My mother wondered why there was never enough time in the day. I've told her, on several occasions, that it is because she spends so many hours of it spending all of her money on things that she doesn't need. She just laughs at me, but, someday, when she decides to actually GLANCE at the balance of her funds, she won't be laughing anymore.

"Well, I suppose we should have seen that one coming... They've been separated for three years too..." I said, a forced smile coming to my lips at the memory of our time spent apart. He had finished cleaning the dishes, and came around to my side of the bar once more. I was wondering if he was going to fill me in on the plans for the day, but to my shock (and, if I'm being honest with myself, pleasure) he wrapped his arms around my shoulders, and laid his head on the crook between my neck and shoulder.

"U-u-um... S-Su-San?" Why was this always so unexpected? Oh. Right. Su-San. No outward emotion/affection. I remember now. He sighed deeply, the breath on my neck giving me goose bumps.

"...Ah missed ya." He said, and I tried to blow it off with a chuckle.

"I missed you too, but we've been over this." I replied, trying not to sound cold.

"Ah know. But ah... Jus' can't belie'e it's bee' three years..."

"I know. I can't either. But hey, at least we're together again!" I said, thinking to myself: Good thing too, because I was on the brink of going suicidal...

"Yeah..." He responded quietly. I expected to be released, but was not. I tried to relax, not wanting to seem unwilling, but still not sure what I was meant to do. So I simply sat there, and allowed him to hold me like that.

He seemed to get his fill then, as he unwrapped his arms, and sat down in the bar-stool next to me once again.

"Wha' do ya wan' ta do today?" He asked me, as if nothing had just happened. I blanched a bit, then attempted to gather my thoughts. I racked my brain, trying to come up with a plausible activity that the two of us could partake in. After careful deliberation, I decided. On shrugging my shoulders. Yes, that does take quite a lot of effort to do.

"I don't really know. Um... We went downtown yesterday, so... What else is there to do?" I asked, looking at him expectantly. He seemed to contemplate that question, before finally coming to a conclusion.

"The beach?" He offered, reminding me that we did, indeed, live near the coast. I lit up to this, getting very, VERY excited.

"The beach? Yes! I want to go! Let's go! Oh, now I'm so excited!" I spewed, already standing up to get ready.

"S'll love swimmin', Ah take it?" He asked, standing as well and moving towards a closet.

"Of course! And I haven't been to the beach in ages! Not since the last time I went with you!" I replied, bouncing in place as he opened the door of the closet.

"When Ah took tha' picture..." He concluded as he pulled a large basket out of the closet.

"Oh! That's right! I need to replace that terrible thing!" To this I got a look.

"Are ya gonna take a picture fer me?" He inquired, turning to me as he placed the basket on the table.

"Yeah! We can do it today! Oh, But I have to go find my swimming trunks... I'll be back as soon as I find them!" I finished, running to my house to search.

Alright, yes, I am a very excitable individual. Su-San is used to it, believe me. Anytime someone mentions 'water' 'swimming' 'pool' or 'beach' my world immediately lights up. I've

always loved swimming, even as a little kid. So I'm pretty sure that Su-San was expecting my reaction when he brought it up.

Once I was in the house and had gone up to my new room, which I hadn't actually seen yet, I had to stop to look around. To my glee, I had gotten the room that had the Victorian style window seat. My room was spacious, and the ceilings were high. And, Upon further inspection, I found that I had a balcony at the back of the room, closed off by a glass door. I was very pleased with it already, even if it was full to the brim with boxes of my things.

Which reminded me, I needed to find my swimming suit. I began locating all of the boxes I had labeled clothes, ripping them open and throwing their contents to the floor. I was on my fifth one, and I was getting exasperated. But, to my luck, I found it inside the fifth one, shoved in with all of my underwear. I pulled the trunks out, and smiled. Then, thinking about it, I went back to the box that had contained most of my shirts. I pulled out a patterned blue button up, to match with my swimming trunks. Satisfied with my finds, I ran back down the stairs, and out the door. I came back to Su-San's house, then I was faced with a choice.

I could knock, as was polite, or I could just go in, which is what I used to do before Su-San left. After thinking it over, I pulled the door open. Why shouldn't I? We were still just as close as we were then. (If not more so!) I saw the basket on the table, and noticed that it now contained towels. I heard some shuffling, but I wasn't quite sure where it was coming from. This induced me to search for the source, and I didn't have to look very long. Su-San was moving things around in the fridge, and there were several items out on the floor.

"Su-San? What are you doing?" I asked him, bending down a bit to be closer to his eye level while he was squatting.

"Oh, Fin. Ah though' we could have a picnic... Is tha' okay?" He questioned, halting in his actions to wait for my response. I smiled, and nodded.

"Of course it is! I love picnics! Do you need any help?" I assured, then tilted my head in question.

"Um... Could ya ma'e sandwiches?" He inquired, to which I nodded. He handed me all of the stuff that I would need to make them, then pointed to the breadbox on top of the microwave.

"Brea's in there." He said, then returned to pulling things out of the refrigerator.

I got to work immediately, making a wide array of them, ranging from ham and cheese, to honey, bananas, and peanut butter. (Yeah, that one's mine. Don't ask...) As I was finishing them all up and had two neat piles stacked up (Meat and non meat) Su-San finished his job as well, and had started placing things into the basket.

I reasoned that I couldn't just shove the uncovered sandwiches into the basket as well, so I decided to hunt for the ziplock bags instead. I began pulling drawers out, hoping that they would contain the plastic bags that I needed, but to no avail. I eventually got frustrated, and crossed my arms over my chest while glaring at the last drawer I had opened. I resolved to finally go and ask Su-San where they were, but found that I already had his attention. He had apparently been watching me the whole time I was looking. My face flushed with embarrassment.

"U-um.. I can't...."

"The're on the coun'er. Ah set 'em out for ya." He said, pointing to the box of ziplocks that were, indeed, sitting on the counter, in plain sight. I blanched when I saw them, then snatched them harshly from the counter and began shoving the sandwiches in.

"You tell no one what you saw today, you here me?" I said in a mock conspiratorial voice.

"Or wha'?" He asked bluntly, causing me to falter.

"Or...Or... Or I'll eat all of your sandwiches!" I shot back pathetically. His lips twitched.

"As if ya coul' eat all of those san'wiches." He retorted, a fake edge to his voice.

“If I really wanted to, I could! Maybe.... Alright, probably not, but it's the fact that I had a comeback that counts!” I relented, then tried to redeem myself. He simply nodded, saying his accented version of “Sure...”

After that, we decided to go ahead and put our suits on, not wanting to bother with the nasty changing rooms that all beaches contain. I claimed the bathroom, stating that I needed the mirror, unlike him.

I got dressed quickly, not wanting to keep him waiting. But I did take the time to fold my clothes and take them with me, so I could change before coming back.

When we met back up in his room, I noticed that we practically matched. We both had blue swimming trunks, and lighter colored blue button up shirts to go with them. His set was just in darker shades.

I grinned, and he held out a bag. I shoved my clothes in, already knowing this routine. Before I had put them in, I saw the blanket he had added for us to sit on.

And, with that, we were out the door.

Chapter End Notes

Double update, as promised!

So, time for random author nonsense.

Technically speaking, this is the most popular SuFin story on fanfiction.net. (Going by amount of reviews. There are other ways to gauge it, but reviews take the most time, so I use that.) So I guess it's weird to me that it's practically unknown on this site. It's going to take some getting used to for sure. But I hope that as many people as possible are able to read and enjoy my stories! Thank you for reading!

Once again, here are some helpful KuroRiya links:

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Well, if you wanted to call me immature or childish before, you will be able to support that with evidence now.

As we neared the beach, my excitement just kept going up and up, to the point where I was asking “Are we almost there?” every few minutes. But Su-San took it all in stride, and would give me an approximation of how much longer it would be. I would groan each time, even down to the five minute marker. It just seemed like much too long! I even started to glare at the clock on the stereo, as I swore it was taking minutes backwards. Finally, the green-blue streaks of ocean started to appear, closely followed by the greyish-yellow sand that made up the beach.

By the time Su-San had begun pulling into a parking space, I had already removed my seatbelt, grabbed the basket, and had my door open with one of my feet sticking out. I got scolded for this.

“Fin! Ah have't e'en parked ye! Calm dow'!” He said, causing me to jump, then pout a little as I pulled my foot back in. He shook his head, as if in disbelief as he pulled the rest of the way in.

“All righ'. Ya can get ou' now.” He informed me, causing me to perk right back up. I pushed the door open, not having closed it, and jumped out. I was up and out, then practically ran to his side of the car, and bounced in anticipation while I waited for him to get out. Which, by the way, he took his sweet time doing! When he finally got out, and had closed his door, I took him by the arm and pulled him down onto the sand. As I said, I was excited!

But this is a perfect example of why I fell for Su-San! He's patient with me when I act oddly. Not many people would let themselves be pulled around by a girly looking teenager that is acting like a five year old at the zoo. But he did, following behind me obediently.

But, he did have to stop me eventually, as I apparently planned on going straight into the water, basket and all. He stopped me when he realised my intent, and pointed over to a shady area that was close to the water.

“Why don' we se' up over there?” He asked, and I nodded, delaying my time in the water momentarily. I grabbed the blanket out of the basket when we arrived at our destination, and handed it to him. He spread it out, then put the basket on it so it wouldn't fly away. He then pulled his shoes off and put them on two of the corners, holding those down. I too removed mine, and he did the same to the remaining corners. I tried to be patient as I waited for him, but I ended up tapping my foot. He noticed, and it earned me a lip twitch. (Just in case we don't remember, Lip Twitch = Su-San smile.)

He nodded his head, and I was about to take off, but he grabbed my arm at the last minute. I looked at him quizzically, and a little pathetically, as I longed to be in the water. He pointed at my chest.

“Are ya gonna wea' that shir' in?” He questioned, starting to undo the buttons of his. I blanched, realising the situation that I suddenly found myself in.

Frankly, I'm not the skinniest guy in the world. People have argued with me that I'm not fat, (or so they say to my face...) so the general consensus is that I'm “thick.” My mother is the one that came up with that one. She says that my figure is pretty much the same as her's,

minus the boobs. She said that I'm simply softer than other guys, and I curve more. For example, other guys' hips are typically described as angular, bony, and strong. Mine are more along the lines of curvy, soft, and feminine. Well, the whole gist of this is that my body is different, and I think I'm fat. (Don't tell my mom, or she'll freak out on me and give me another lecture on how "YOU HAVE NO FAT ON YOUR BODY! NONE! YOU JUST CURVE!")

But anyway, yes, I hesitated. I didn't really want Su-San to see that much of me, as I didn't want to ruin any image he might have had of me... I turned back to him, as if I was looking to him for assurance, and found that he was quite shirtless.

(Let's just say that, for those of you who watch anime, I felt like I had a projectile nosebleed coming on. I, of course, refrained, seeing as I am not one of those infamous anime characters that fangirls just love to write yaoi fanfics about. No. Not at all.)

It took me a moment to recover from gaping at him dumbfoundedly. When I did, I realised that there were hands at my throat.

I freaked out a little, yes. I doubt that there is anyone in this world who wouldn't worry just a little if someone's hands were that close to choking them. But instead of doing what I thought that they would, Su-San's fingers began the deft task of undoing the buttons of my shirt.

"Uh... Um... Su-San? Wh-what are you doing?" I stuttered, trying my best NOT to read into this. He glanced at me, then returned to his work.

"Ya were spacin' ou' so I figured ah'd do it." He responded, speaking as though he WASN'T undressing me.

"Um... okay... but..." and then I remembered why I hadn't taken my own shirt off. "Oh! Oh, no! Su-San, I... um... I... I changed my mind!" I tried, succeeding in halting his movements. "bout wha'?" He asked, looking a bit worried.

"I.. I don't want to swim... Today..." I finished, hoping to be believed. He dropped his hands from the buttons, then used them to pull my chin up to look at him.

"Are ya sick?" He asked, feeling my forehead. I shook my head.

"No. I just... I guess I'm not feeling it today..." I replied. He looked at me for a little longer, then pushed me down on to the blanket by my shoulders, sitting next to me. He just sat there for a moment, and I was too worried to break the silence.

"Fin, wha's wrong?" He asked me finally. I looked up at him, and attempted to smile.

"Nothing! Nothing at all! I just..." He cut me off.

"Two secon's ago ya coul'n't wait ta get in, now ya don' wan' to?" I paused, then sighed.

"I... I guess..."

"Fin, did ah do somethin' wrong? Did ah make ya uncomfor'able?" He asked me seriously, and I shook my head vigorously.

"No! Not that isn't it at all! Really! I just..." I expected him to interrupt again, but he didn't. So that meant he was going to wait for me to finish.

"I..I just don't... I don't really feel... comfortable with... With how I look... So I..." I finished pathetically, refusing to look at him. We both fell to silence, and I figured that he probably agreed with me. He probably thought I was ugly too.

I gasped in surprise when I found that I couldn't see. I slowly registered that I had moved, into a lap to be precise, and had arms around me, encasing me in a little cave.

"Fin, why woul' ya worry 'bout tha'? The only person who's gonna pay 'ttention to ya is me, an' you know I don' care wha' you look like. And 'sides tha', I think ya'r beaut'ful, so ya don' need ta be embarassed." He said lowly, right into my ear. My face flushed, and my heart sped up. That one got to me, I have to admit. I wasn't used to direct compliments, and coming from him... It was...

I looked up, and found him looking at me calmly.

"R-Really?" I asked childishly, and he nodded. My cheeks got redder, but I nodded. "O-okay. I'll get in." I said quietly, and he let me go. We both stood up, and he waited as I struggled with my buttons. It's not really that it was a difficult shirt to undo, I was just worried about it. As I neared the last button, I nearly froze up, but my determination (as well as the fact that Su-San was now waiting on me... Irony...) forced me to undo it. I took a deep breath, and finally pulled the fabric from my shoulders, letting it drop onto the blanket. I waited, expecting a mean remark from him, something along the lines of "Oh, you're right, you are fat. Put it back on." But none came. I looked up at him, and found that his face was pretty much neutral, with only a hint of something I hadn't seen before. Something about his eyes that I couldn't place.

"See? Yer fine. Le's go." He said, causing me to sigh in relief a little, before smiling. I nodded, and began to walk towards the water once again, but was halted, once again, by Su-San's voice.

"Fin! Wai! Ah need yer help." He called, and I turned. I found him looking around, rather helplessly, and noticed that he didn't have his glasses.

"Oh, right, sorry! I forgot how blind you are without those things!" I said, returning to his side and taking his arm. "Come on!" I said, my previous vigor returning. Yes, I still felt pretty awkward, not being covered up. I wasn't really used to being in public with so little clothing on, seeing as I hadn't used a public pool in years, settling instead for our pool in the backyard. It hadn't been very big, but you could get wet in it.

But knowing that Su-San didn't mind how I looked was encouraging, and I decided to completely ignore all of the people around me.

I splashed into the cool water, Su-San in tow, and continued further in. Most people are a bit weary of going very far into the ocean, but I always go as far as I can without a fear of drowning. And Su-San, being impaired without his glasses, has no real choice but to follow me. Granted, it probably isn't quite as exciting for him, seeing as he is so much taller than me. That's why I was already up to my ribcage in water. Just a little farther...

And that was as far as I would go. Only up to my shoulder blades. Even if I wanted to go any deeper, it would render my arms useless. So I stopped here, and turned to Su-San, letting go of his arm.

"So... You realise what is about to happen, correct?" I asked, false sugar dripping from every word. He blinked at me, sighed, and nodded.

This earned him a huge face full of water. It was a tradition! I HAD to splash him! Always! But, in turn, he splashed me back. Also ritual.

And, well, I guess you can guess what ensued. Two teenage males in the ocean. What else would happen?

We went back and forth for about ten minutes, neither one of us really knowing who was winning. Splash, then turn around to avoid getting salt water in your mouth or eyes. Then I turned to take my turn at splashing, and found that Su-San was nowhere to be found. I turned around, doing a 360, wondering if he had somehow teleported behind me. No such luck. Then I guessed that he had probably gone underwater, and would be popping up for air anytime now. So I waited. And waited. And waited.

After a few too many seconds had passed, I began to panic. Had he been swept out to sea? Was he drowning? Was he getting raped by a tentacle monster? (Don't ask...)

I started to wade around, searching the water frantically, calling his name pathetically.

Then I heard a splash, felt arms around me, and was then completely submerged in water. I nearly gasped, but realised that that probably wasn't such a great idea when underwater. So I

held my breath. When I finally couldn't take it, I let the breath I was holding out, and bubbles came from my mouth.

I was then released, allowed to come up for breath.

I came up gasping and coughing, trying to inhale the air I had been denied. After I had caught my breath, I turned to find a rather smug looking Su-San looking right back at me.

"You... How do you hold your... Your breath so... Long...." I asked through multiple gasps.

He nearly shrugged his shoulders. I rolled my eyes.

"That isn't normal! You nearly gave me a heart attack!" I scolded, going as far as to wag my finger at him. I kept my fake scowl in place for a few seconds, glaring at him. But then I cracked a smile. "But you got me pretty good, I must say." I said, grinning. I got a lip twitch in return.

Now, don't think that I left it at that! Oh no. I would get my revenge. But not right at that moment. He would expect it then.

"Hey, Su-San? I'm getting a little hungry. Can we go eat, then come back?" I asked, and he nodded. So I took his arm and led him back to the sand. Once we had gotten back to the blanket, he reached for his glasses.

After regaining his sight, he motioned for me to sit down, which I did. He then started pulling out the sandwiches and other snacks we had packed. He sat next to me, and we began to eat.

"Hey Su-San? What time is it?" I asked. He pulled his watch out of the basket. (He had taken it off and put it in there so that it wouldn't get wet when we got in.)

"Bout ten thir'y." He answered, tossing it back in.

"Hmm... How long are we going to stay?"

"As long as you want." He replied, almost immediately. I giggled.

"Then we'd be here all day!" I said, to which he shrugged.

"Tha's fine." He stated, causing me to raise my eyebrow.

"Oh really? Okay, then I'm going to make it a week!"

"Alrigh" I blanched.

"You can't be serious!" I exclaimed.

"Neither are ya." He retorted. I smirked, shaking my head.

"It's mean to tease people..." I reprimanded playfully. He turned to me, his expression suddenly very serious.

"If ya really wan' ta stay here the' we can." He said, not a hint of humor in his tone.

"I-I was kidding Su-San!" I stuttered, holding my hands up in surrender. He stared at me for a moment, as if to confirm that I was telling the truth, then quietly returned to his food. I shook my head slightly in disbelief, then went back to mine as well.

And then I got my revenge idea. I smirked evilly into my sandwich, finishing it quickly.

"Su-San? Are you almost done?" I asked, looking up at him with my best attempt at puppy dog eyes. He looked down, paused, then nodded, shoving the rest of his sandwich into his mouth. I grinned, then stood up. "Great! Let's go!" I exclaimed, waiting for him to drop his glasses into the basket, then took his arm once again.

"Yer s'posed ta wait thir'y minutes to ge' back in." He informed me, though he didn't resist as I pulled him into the water yet again.

"Oh, whatever! Like something is actually gonna happen!" I said, sarcasm lacing my words. The whole "thirty minutes" thing was actually part of my plan. What luck he remembered.

"Mhm."

I pulled him out, further this time, to where the water was at my chin, meaning it was at his shoulders. And I kept going, standing on the tips of my toes. Still, he raised no objections. Now I just had to wait. And... There it was! My opportunity!

A wave came in. Not a really big one, nothing to worry about, really. But it would serve my purpose well. I timed it, and, as soon as the water had crashed over both my head and his, I let go of his arm, and swam away. I surfaced a little ways away from Su-San, behind him. I waited, staying low, so that he couldn't see me. (the fact that he's pretty much blind at this point was rather useful.) He began circling frantically, just like I had done. I smirked. But this wasn't the end of my little trick. Oh no.

I swam out a bit deeper, so that my feet couldn't touch the bottom. Then I yelled.

"S-Su-San! Su-San!" I called, allowing myself to bob in and out of the water, making a rather realistic impression of drowning. I sputtered, and continued calling.

Needless to say, he was at my side as fast as he could get through the water. As soon as he got to me, he pulled me to him, and started towards shallower water. Eventually, we got to where the water was only up to his navel, and he looked down at me. For once, the worry in his expression was very obvious.

"Fin? Are ya alrigh'? Fin?" He asked, still holding me, bridal style, out of the water. I tried to stifle it, wanting to enjoy this for a bit longer, but I couldn't stop the burst of laughter that came out.

"Oh my god, you really fell for it!" I said between my fits of laughter, and gasps of air. He looked at me, confused, which only made me laugh harder. "Seriously? You had to have been expecting it! You did it to me!" I finished, and it finally dawned on him what I had just done. And, as teenage males tend to do, he decided to get HIS revenge.

The next thing I knew, I was flying through the air, then I connected with the water. After flailing momentarily, I resurfaced, and found a proud Su-San looking down at me.

"Y-you threw me!" I exclaimed, standing up. To be frank, I was surprised he had the ability to throw me. I'm not a feather! I do have some meat on these bones! Granted, he definitely has the muscles to back him up.

"Ah did." He confirmed. I growled lowly, and then lunged, attaching myself to him in an attempt to throw him off balance. He, however, was not affected in the least.

Tino uses lunge, it's not very effective...

So instead, I was left dangling from his back. I chuckled sheepishly, then whispered into his ear.

"You were supposed to lose your balance, and fall over..."

"Ah." He said, then fell over backwards into the water. Being attached to his back, I obviously went with him. When we came up, I was laughing once again.

"Well, I suppose that works as well. Wanna call it a draw?" I asked, sticking my hand out. He nodded, shaking it. "Good!" I said, pulling him back into deeper water.

We had a few races, of which I managed to win three. (Granted, he probably ALLOWED me to win those three...) After that, we found an abandoned water-football, and tossed that a few times. (He managed to catch every single one that I threw, even without his glasses.) We got out after that.

We finished what we hadn't eaten of the picnic, then decided that we would walk along the beach, as far as we could go. Childish, I know, but that was our goal. We packed all of our stuff back into the basket, and took it back to his car before we left. We both put our shirts back on, then started walking. We took our shoes, though neither of us had them on. At this point, the sand had cooled down, seeing as the sun was setting, and therefore wasn't heating the sand to the point that it was cooking the poor feet of anyone brave enough to tread on it. Eventually, the populated hotspot of the beach gave way to more untouched bits. As we got further and further away, the footprints began to disappear, and finally went away completely, the only signs of human life being the footprints that Su-San and I were leaving. Even the

city was blocked out, as a cliff began to rise opposite the water, trapping us in a natural sanctuary.

"...Hey, Su-San?" He grunted quietly to show that he acknowledged me. "Thanks for taking me out today. I had a lot of fun!" I said, smiling at him happily. The tide splashed at my feet, bringing my eyes down momentarily.

"Ah had fun too." He said, barely audible. I snapped my attention back to him.

"Really? I wasn't boring?" I asked, hoping that that wasn't the case.

"No. No' at all." He assured me, and I looked back down to hide a blush.

If you've ever felt so special that it hurts, then you know how I felt. I know that there aren't a lot of people capable of making someone else feel that way, but Su-San could do that for me. That's probably the biggest reason that I fell for him. No matter what we do, he always accommodates me, and makes me feel like he would give me anything, regardless of what it was.

Unfortunately, the one thing that I wanted the most was a request that I knew he wouldn't fulfill. And he would probably never understand how badly this moment was hurting me. Don't think for a second that I didn't realise how romantic this whole thing was. I'm not stupid. A walk along a deserted beach, accompanied only by the one you love with all of your heart... It's something almost everyone dreams of. I'm no exception to the rule. I just never expected it to hurt so much.

To think, he was so close, just inches away. The hand I was longing to hold was within my reach, so available. The lips I so desperately wished to kiss, beckoning to me from so near. The feelings I so badly wished to convey to him, right on the tip of my tongue. But all of it, so forbidden. So many rules that could be broken in that moment, weighing over every action I made. The many boundaries that were silently and subconsciously set up completely overruling any ability to confess to the looming attraction I felt.

So, instead, I continued walking, silently, ignoring that body, so close, that hand, so available, those lips, so near, and those words, so speakable. I walked on, alongside the one I loved, damp, happy, melancholy, on the verge of tears, and with no true destination in my mind.

Chapter End Notes

So, I suppose that I was in a rather... bitter(?) mood? It might have been my music choice, but this chapter turned out to be rather bittersweet... I need to not listen to sad sounding music when I write... Emo things happen!

I tried to make the beach part fun... I don't really know what else they could do at the beach, aside from messing with each other... That's what me and my friends do when we go swimming! We demand piggyback rides, scare the piss out of each other, then race to the buoys.

Also, can you tell how badly I want to live near the beach? I live in freaking Missouri, and am therefore nowhere NEAR a beach!

As always, here are the links!

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

We kept walking, neither of us really feeling the pain that should have been tempting us to stop. Eventually, we realised that the sun had completely disappeared, and had been replaced by a half full moon. We decided to turn back then, following our footsteps back to where we had come from. All of this was done in silence, both of us too scared to break it in fear of shattering the comfort of our walk thus far.

When we got back to the part of the beach we had come to originally, I was a bit surprised to find that it was completely void of all of the life that had been here before we left. The only thing to remind me that anyone had been here at all were the abandoned or forgotten toys, and the thousands of overlapping footprints, slowly being smoothed away by the ever growing tide.

I glanced around, then looked up at Su-San.

"It... It's completely deserted, huh?" I asked, only then realising how long it had been since I had spoken, as I had to clear my throat in order to speak at all. He nodded.

"Mus' be late." He reasoned, turning to head to his car, which was the only one still parked in the lot. I followed, looking back at the sand that looked so lonely, so abandoned.

When we got to his car, he and I both got in, and he started the engine. As the dashboard came to life with the car, I looked at the stereo to find that it was, indeed, late. Very late.

"It's already 12:57? Were we really here that long?" I exclaimed.

"Ah guess so." He confirmed, pulling out of the lot.

"Jeeze! I hope my mom isn't freaking out right now!" I sighed.

"O' course she is." He replied, getting on course to take us home.

"I know... I just... Could you... Could you hide me? Maybe she'll be less angry tomorrow?" I requested, looking up at him with those attempted puppy dog eyes yet again.

"Pro'bly be more an'ry." He replied. I groaned.

"I hate it when you're right..." I finished, accepting my fate. We drove the rest of the way home in silence, Su-San being a quiet individual, and me too busy contemplating my eminent doom to speak.

Before I knew it, he was pulling into his driveway. I looked to my house, and found that the lights were still on. Great. She was awake.

"Um... Are you sure you can't hide me?" I tried once again. He simply took the keys out of the ignition, and opened his door. I got out as well, and met him at the front of the car.

"Goo' luck." He said quietly, then ruffled my hair. I let out yet another sigh.

"Thanks. I'll need it." And with that, I began on my way home. At the last minute, I heard him call to me.

"Ya never took tha' picture." He reminded me. I turned around, and looked at him, very confused.

"Wha...?" Then it dawned on me what he meant. "Oh! That's right! I'm sorry Su-San!" I called back. He shook his head, though I barely saw it in the scarce light.

"Nex' time." He decided, and I agreed, then turned back to my house. Here it came...

As I opened the door, I noticed that things were a bit TOO normal. I looked around, expecting to have been attacked by now. But my mother was nowhere to be seen. Cautiously,

I removed my shoes, and dropped them at the door. I continued into the kitchen, and finally found what I had feared. My mother was at the table, currently on her cellphone. I groaned internally as she glanced at me, showing that she had indeed noticed me. I waited, fidgeting as I contemplated what my fate might be. She hung up, then turned to me, causing me to gulp. She paused, then gave me an odd look.

"Um... Do you need something, Tino?" She asked, causing my jaw to drop.

"What... You do know what time it is, right?" I questioned, to which she simply nodded.

"Yes. So?"

"I... I just got home!"

"I noticed..."

"Aren't you mad? I was out late without telling you!" I exclaimed, so utterly confused.

"Why would I be mad? Berwald left a note over at his house for us, saying that you guy might be out late." She replied, and I was reduced to a gaping mess.

"H-he left a note?" I asked, wanting confirmation.

"Yes, he did. Do you see the police that I would have called if he hadn't?" She said, gesturing around the house that was, indeed, void of any Policemen. I just sat there, dumbfounded for a moment, then snapped back to coherent thought.

"I AM GOING TO KILL HIM!" I yelled, stomping over to the door, fully intending to go over to his house and give him a proper what-for. But my mother put a hand on my shoulder.

"Tino, it's one in the morning." She informed me.

"So? He made me worry all the way home!" I threw back. "I'm going to go and..."

"Tomorrow." She cut me off, pushing me towards the stairs.

"But..."

"No Buts. Go to bed." She interrupted once again.

"Hey! Wait! Mom..."

"No. It's time for little boys to be in bed."

"Mom! I'm sixteen!"

"And I'm thirty eight. My name is Laila, and I enjoy long walks on the beach and a hearty bottle of wine on occasion. Isn't it great that we're getting to know each other so well!

Unfortunately, speed dating time is over, so we'll have to finish this little conversation some other time. Perhaps tomorrow." She said, poking me in the back until I was all the way to the top of the stairs. I sighed, admitting defeat, and went to my room.

"Hyvää yötä, Tino." She called, and I turned back before closing my door.

"Hyvää yötä." I called back, then closed my door. Looking around, I cringed. All of my stuff was still boxed up. But my bed was clean, and had my pillows and blanket tossed on it, so I decided to bypass the mess, and fell into bed. I figured I could unpack my room when I woke up the next day.

I fell into bed, pulling off my shirt. I noticed that I was still in my swimming trunks, and then I put together that my clothes were still in Su-San's bag. I sighed, then lifted my hips to slide them off. I was too exhausted to even bother with finding something else to put on. My mother never woke me up when I wasn't attending school, and even if she did, she would knock on the door before coming in.

Just the simple action of removing my trunks was enough to make me realise how much I had truly worked my poor body. I guess it hadn't dawned on me that so much exercise would leave me sore.

I tried to ignore that, deciding that I would rather deal with it tomorrow. I pulled the blankets around me, practically mummifying myself. That's how I liked to sleep. I then did my best to scoot over to the wall, as I was most comfortable when pressed against it. Finally

comfortable, I allowed my mind and body to relax. Just before I fell asleep, I thought of the day I had just had, then words, ones I had been saying all my life, crossed my lips. I had used them so often, just moments ago to my mother, but they had so much more weight when I said them this time.

“Hyvää yötä, Su-San.” I whispered, wondering if he ever said goodnight to me when he was going to sleep. I smiled at the thought, enjoying the way it made my heart beat faster and my whole body get warmer. “Rakastan sinua, I love you.”

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Berwald's Interlude.

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Don't think badly of me for messing with Tino. Yes, I was fully aware of the fact that I had left a note. I had, after all, been the one to leave it. But by sending him home without him knowing it, I was giving him an excuse to come and see me the next day, though he would be coming to yell at me.

I suppose that I did this because of a nagging feeling I had in my stomach. To be honest, I was still trying to wrap my mind around the fact that Tino was back in my life. After being separated for three years, I gave up hope on ever really seeing him again. And then, so randomly, so out of the blue, there he was. The same adorable, clumsy, gullible, Finnish Tino that I had grown so fond of over the years, about to drop boxes full of glass and faceplant into his new driveway, which, to my delight, was right next to mine.

Though I managed not to, I wanted to cry just as much as he actually did. As anyone will tell you, I'm not the best at expressing my emotions, but that doesn't mean that I don't have them at all. Tino can tell you that. He's gotten pretty good at reading my expressions over the years.

And how many years is “over the years”? Around ten, if I'm not mistaken. We met the first day of kindergarten, and have been close ever since then. We only started to grow apart after I had to move, three years ago. That was rough, to say the least. We both took the news disastrously hard. I'm sure you've heard the term: Long-distance relationships don't work out. Well, it's true, and we both knew it. We knew as soon as I got on that plane, it was over. We could call each other, even set up visits. But it was never going to be the same. It just couldn't.

He'll never know about this, but I cried after I got on the plane too. He watched as I got onto the platform, and watched me leave, and it didn't take 20/20 vision to know that he was bawling. I kept my composure while he could still see me, as I had to be strong for him, but as soon as I was out of sight, I just imploded.

Granted, my version of crying is a lot less obvious. Just a few drops of the salty liquid, some nearly silent sniffles, and I called it good. I hate it when people see me looking so pathetic. I've always been the strong one, so I couldn't let that facade crumble. Definitely not around Fin.

I've always been what Fin calls a “rock”. Basically, I'm always there to offer support, and I'm always stable. I suppose that he's never realised how far from that I am, but I guess that means I've become quite the actor. He just doesn't seem to comprehend what he does to me. Every time he would come to me crying, hurt, happy, excited, wanting something, needing something, just wanting to talk, anything, all I wanted to do was wrap my arms around him

and tell him how much he truly meant to me. Which, let me tell you, is a lot.

My whole world revolves around that boy. Ever since kindergarten, when I couldn't resist the urge to step up to the plate and defend him. I don't really know what it was that drew me to him initially, but as soon as I saw those tears, my protective instincts kicked in. And the funny thing? I'm only protective of HIM. He's the only one that I've ever felt the need to protect. Maybe it's the fact that he's so clumsy and danger prone...

Regardless, after we acquired our nicknames, and set our friendship in stone, we were inseparable. (Oh, and just to point out, we didn't realise that 'san' is an honorific in Japan until much later. We both assumed it was just something cute that people in Japanese movies called each other.)

If you were looking for one of us, knowing the other's location was all you needed. We were always together, and it was very rare for us to so much as vacation without the other. And the strange thing? We never fought. Most friends fight frequently, or so I've heard. But we never really disagree about anything. I guess that could be due to the fact that I've never wanted anything more than to please him, and fulfill his every wish.

Why? Well, he's the only person that has ever acknowledged that I am, indeed, a human. Most people are too scared of me to even try talking to me. I know that Fin was more than a little intimidated by me at first, but he actually gave me a chance, and it bloomed into something so irreplaceable. I could never thank him enough for the chance he gave me, but I have definitely been trying.

Well, as you can probably gather, I'm rather infatuated with Tino. Actually, there isn't a 'rather'. I love him to pieces. All of him, all of his looks, his speech, his quirks, everything. But, one issue. I can never tell him.

I can't risk demolishing the relationship that we have managed to nurse into maturity. That's why, even though it hurt me bad enough that I contemplated suicide, I eventually decided that me moving might have been a good thing. Don't think horribly of me, I have reasoning behind this.

When I left, we had just started to hit puberty. Well, me before him, considering the almost full year of age difference, but you get the point. What with all the hormones running rampant, it was pretty much expected that I would jump him. The question was when? There were so many times that I truly had to restrain myself, forcing myself not to reach out and grab him. Everyday he did something that seemed so normal to him, but hit me much harder than it should.

His random giggles, the way he would flush at the mere mention of anything 'romantic' or 'dirty', the way his anger would flare every time a girl would approach me, the way he would insist that girls were stupid, and all we needed was each other. I always wanted to read into all of it more than I did. I always wanted to think "He likes me!" But I always knew better.

Tino never quite understood what was going on, and I blamed it on the age difference.

And that brings us to another reason that moving might have been good. I was constantly on the verge of coming out and confessing to him. I almost did, once. I simply told him, "Fin, I love ya."

He looked at me for a moment, then chuckled before responding with, "I love you too, Su-San! But you know that!"

It was then that I realised exactly what kind of situation I was in. We were too close for that statement to really mean anything other than a friendship, or maybe a brotherly love. It was too overused in our relationship, as we had grown to truly cherish one another. Though it wasn't like we said it all the time, like girls do, it was kind of unspoken knowledge. But I didn't have the courage to pursue the topic further, so it was dropped.

So I decided, after one year of being without him, completely alone in the world, that it was for the best. Better to leave with no a wonderful relationship, than to have stayed and shattered it beyond belief. And so, the phone calls grew less frequent, and I allowed us to grow apart. It hurt, every time I heard his dejected goodbye, up to the very last time I called him, each time the pain seeming to grow as I realised exactly what I was relinquishing. But I did it, and I stopped calling all together after the second year.

I tried adapting to my new life, waking up alone, and going to sleep missing something. Everything I did seemed to reflect Tino in some way. No matter where I went, I thought of him, and no matter what I did, it seemed empty and pointless without the smaller blonde by my side.

I fell into a depression during the second half of the third year. I refused to get out of bed, and hardly ate. It worried my mother so much that she took me to a doctor. When I said depression, I meant the real deal. I got prescribed pills and everything. I have to admit, they helped a lot. I started going back to school again, and everything returned to normality, or the sad excuse that I had accepted as my new reality. I still felt the echos of Tino in everything, but I learned to just enjoy it, instead of letting it hurt me.

Still, I wasn't really myself anymore. I was just a shell, walking around, pretending to be Su-San. Even the things I did weren't really things that I decided to do. They were things that Su-San would have done.

Even going over to the neighbor's house to ask them if they needed help unpacking wasn't something I'd wanted to do. Not catching the boy, or his boxes. It was all Su-San, the person I had been, the person that I had abandoned.

And then, all at once, my whole world snapped into place once again. I was me again, and all of my actions became mine once more. Because, to my utter disbelief, the boy hiding behind the boxes of glass, was none other than the one that Su-San lived for.

..-.-.-.-+.-.-.-.-.

I have to say, it feels nice to be me once again. I haven't felt alive for the past three years. I just shoved Su-San into the back of my mind, as if saving myself for some occasion. And then Fin appeared out of nowhere, and I was Su-San all over again.

So, I guess that's when I realised how much I truly need that little, pathetic, clumsy, Finnish, blonde, crazy, danger prone, loveable Tino in my life. He WAS my life. I was only ME when I was with HIM. The person that I had been parading around disappeared, and I was reborn as Su-San again. And it felt wonderful. Everything I had forgotten how to feel came rushing back to me in that single moment, all of the happiness, all of the pain, all of the joy, all of the hurt, all of the love, everything. And I understood then that, up to that point, I had been numb. I refused to feel anything, and therefore shut ALL of my emotions completely off. But now, with Fin in front of me, bawling like the baby he is, I was elated. I was in pain. I was excited. I was regretful. I was in love. All over again.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter just kind of poured out, in a random rush of emotions, so I hope that it wasn't too incredibly confusing. Well, as you can see, this is an interlude by Sweden. I

doubt that I'll do these very often, as it is harder for me to get into that head of his, but I thought that it might be nice to get into his point of view for a second. Did I do alright with it? I hope so! Oh, and before I forget, there was some Finnish in this installment, huh? Alright, translation time, though you can probably use context clues to figure it out.

Hyvää yötä. - This means goodnight.

Rakastan Sinua - I love you

We'll be back in Tino's perspective next time around. Um... I can't really think of much else to write at the moment, so I'll thank you for reading!

Here are the links:

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When I woke up, I was confused. I didn't know where I was, and I wasn't sure if I even had a left foot. So, yeah, it can be deciphered that I'm REALLY not a morning person. I looked around, only seeing the ceiling, considering I hadn't even attempted to sit up yet. After glaring at the ceiling momentarily, as if demanding an explanation, I remembered that ceilings can't talk, and sat up.

I hissed as cold air hit my bare chest. Yes, it was august, but air conditioning is quite a powerful thing. I tried looking around again, and found much more to give me hints. Though the room was unfamiliar, I recognized my clothes all over the floor, ripped out of boxes.

That's right... we moved...

I made to stand, but stopped when I felt the blanket brush against something that SHOULDN'T have been brushed. Lifting the blanket and looking down, I found that I was, indeed, naked. How naked, you ask? About as naked as the day I was born.

I groaned, knowing that there was probably some kind of story that would explain to me why I was naked, and it would all come rushing back to me, eventually. I just had to wait for it. So I got up, and started fishing through the clothes that I had strewn ever where. As I picked through them, I tried to recall why I would have thrown them everywhere, but nothing came to mind. I pulled out an old T-shirt, and pulled on some blue jeans that I had cut off into thigh-length shorts. Actually, if I was remembering correctly, they used to be Su-San's jeans, back when he was eleven. That just shows our size difference! They just recently started to fit me! (I have to wear a belt with them though, or they fall off.)

I headed for my door, deciding on going to the bathroom to fix my hair, which, have I mentioned, is an incurable disease in the morning? Yes? Alright, just checking. But, before I could make it there, I noticed my swimming trunk laying on the floor next to my bed. None of my other clothes had made it that far, so I was left to wonder why on earth my suit was out.

Aaaaaaaaand that's when my memories came back. Everything I did the day before, flooding back into my sleep fogged mind. All of the playing, all of the tricks, all of the fun, and all of the almost-romance. I sighed, running a hand through my hair, cursing internally. Thinking about how CLOSE that whole situation had been, I was kind of longing to be held. Even if it didn't mean anything for him, I was kind of in need of some comfort. (Or maybe I just needed to release some tension... Well, either way...)

I went ahead into my bathroom, contemplating how I was going to get a hug out of the giant, nothing in particular coming to mind. After examining myself in the mirror, I realised that I was in desperate need of a shower, and therefore stripped off the clothes that I had dragged on. Turning the water on, I stepped in. When I switched from the faucet to the shower-head, I yelped, as the scalding water came out and hit my skin. I quickly jumped out of the way, and reached for the hot water tap. I forgot that I had just moved, and I would have to adjust my habits to the new house.

Once I found a decent temperature that I was comfortable with, I eased back in, letting the water relax my sore calves. I'm apparently not made for large amounts of walking, if my legs

have anything to say on the subject. I decided that I needed to eat, so I went ahead and washed myself and turned the water off. I grabbed a towel that my mother had, thankfully, already unpacked and stashed underneath the sink. Drying off, I realised that I had a surefire way to get that hug, and it had to do with something that I had just remembered about the day before. Grinning to myself, I dressed and went downstairs, my hair wrapped up in the towel to dry. My mother was in the kitchen, spatula in hand.

"Morning, Tino! Did you enjoy your shower? I meant to tell you, the hot water comes out easier on this one..." She said, putting my food onto a plate.

"Yeah, I found that out the hard way..." I deadpanned, and she stuck her tongue out at me.

"No 'oh, mom, that's okay, it wasn't that bad!'" She asked me, immaturity dripping from the words.

"Oh, mom, that's okay, it wasn't that bad!" I said sarcastically. "I mean, I only almost burned my skin off, but what does it matter? My skin isn't important!" I continued, to which she rolled her eyes.

"Alright, Alright, I get it. Sorry." She said, slamming my orange juice down in front of me before starting on her plate. I reached for the liquid and downed it quickly before taking the glass and my plate to the sink.

"You're already done?" She asked me, her eyes wide. I sighed loudly and turned to her.

"No, mom, I just put plates full of food into the sink. I like to let my food marinate in the dirty dish water for a few hours before I eat it. It really brings out the flavor of the eggs." I said, and she raised an eyebrow.

"In a sarcastic mood today, I take it?" To which I chuckled and nodded.

"Maybe a little. I'm going over to Su-San's house, so I'll see you later." I said, moving towards the door and pulling on my shoes. Before I left, I turned and called to her. "Love you mom! I'll be back soon!"

"Alright!" She called back, and I took my exit.

Now I was getting a little excited. (More than I probably should have...) I was getting that hug, come hell or high water! I'd earned it, after all! I came to his door, and decided to knock, considering the fact that his mother would most likely be home, and I didn't want to walk in on something she didn't want me to see.

The door opened rather quickly after I knocked on it. Though I had been expecting Ms. Oxenstierna, I was met with Su-San. A rather groggy looking Su-San, but a Su-San none the less. Well, he was a little 'less' in the clothing department, wearing only a pair of long sleeper pants, which, let me tell you, hung so wonderfully from those protruding hipbones and...

CHANGING TOPICS!

He looked at me, then yawned as quietly as he could. That just fueled my argument that much more, so I jumped him!

"Well that was rude!" I scolded, to which he gave me a look. I scowled. "I take time out of my busy schedule to come and see you, and all you can do when you see me is yawn?" I asked, earning me a raise of an eyebrow.

"If ya only came 'ere ta yell at me, then yes, tha' is all Ah can do." He said, though I knew it was in good humor.

"Oh, I'm nowhere near done! You lied to me yesterday!" I exclaimed, which got a twitch of the lip. "I thought I was going to die, and you LET me think that? Is that what a true friend would do?" I finished, then waited for a response.

"Uh... Would ya believe me if Ah said tha' Ah forgo'?" He asked, and I responded with a shake of my head. "Hmm... Ah didn't think so... Um... A Moomin ma'e me do i'?" He tried, which almost got me to chuckle, but I managed to keep it in.

“Oh no! That is sooooo not getting you out of this one!” I assured. Despite having a weakness for the things, I had to keep my resolve. Moomins or a hug? I think it's clear which one I wanted more.

“W'll, ya must be pre'y angry ta ignore the Moomins...” He noted, causing me to nod.

“Yep! So, what are you going to do to make it up to me?” I asked, wondering if he was going to get the hint. It was a fifty percent chance, but he seemed to be pretty clever today, so I was hoping that I had more of a fifty-one percent chance.

“Hmm... Le's see... A trip ta the beach? Oh, we a'ready did tha'... A ride in mah car? Oh, did tha' too...” He started, making my heart deflate a little. I guess he must have noticed, as he stopped picking on me, and wrapped his big arms around my shoulders. I gasped a bit at first, but then smiled. So he HAD known what I was after. I suppose he does have his observant days.

“So'ry, this is gonna haf'ta do fer now.” He said, and I finally let out the chuckle I had been holding the whole time.

“I suppose this will suffice, for today. Don't forget that you owe me though!” I said, returning the hug.

It felt just about as good as I thought it would. It was definitely a relief from all of the tension I had built up the night before, trying not to spill my guts. But all good things must come to an end. So I let go. It nearly brought me to tears, but hey, gotta learn your boundaries.

“Alright, well, I just wanted to say good morning. I've actually got to spend the day at home today.” I said, giving a half smile. “Got to get unpacked. Mom's already nearly done, and I haven't even started!” I explained. He looked at me, then away, then back.

“Ya wan' any help?” He asked, rubbing the back of his head. I raised an eyebrow.

“Did you honestly believe me when I said I only came over to say good morning?” I countered. His lip twitched, and he stepped back to let me into the house.

“Alrigh'. Le' me go ge' dressed. Ya can go grab somethin' out of the fridge if ya wan'.” He said, already on his way up the stairs.

“Already ate.” I called back, and then collapsed onto the couch. I grinned as I did, remembering how fond I had been of this couch. This was where I would sit if the two of us were working on something, such as homework. (And believe me, it wasn't a rare occasion...) It was wonderfully comfortable, and practically belonged to me, considering the fact that I had claimed it as such years ago.

I wasn't kept waiting for very long, as I heard footsteps coming down the stairs. You'd think that Su-San would have heavy footfall, but he doesn't, really. Actually, if I were to truly describe it, I would almost say that it's a bit lighter than other people. Well, he DOES put the 'gentle' in Gentle Giant... He came to the side of the couch and looked down at me. I smiled back sheepishly.

“Comfy?” He asked, and I nodded as a grin plastered itself all over my face.

“Very much so. Ready to go?” I countered, to which he gave a short nod and offered me his hand. I took it, though I flushed a little at the contact, and allowed him to pull me to my feet. He followed me out the door, then back to my house. As we neared the door, I noticed that he was looking up at the front of the house.

“Can Ah guess which one is yer's?” He inquired. I smiled and nodded. “The one to the fa' lef’?” He guessed, causing me to grin.

“You got it. How'd you guess?”

“Windo' seat.” He said simply, and I chuckled. Looks like I was pretty predictable. “Yer righ' across from me.” He informed me, which induced me to look up in surprise. Sure enough, now that I was looking, he was right. My room, if our houses were connected, would be

touching his. This made me smile a bit.

“Looks like we're neighbors! Well... More so than before?” I said, chuckling at my weird reasoning. His lip twitched slightly, and I opened the door.

We both removed our shoes at the door, though I took mine upstairs with me to dump into my closet. My mother always got on my case about leaving my shoes by the door. (I once accumulated five different pairs all at once, and she was furious.) We passed her on our way up, and she said a quick hello to Su-San. He stayed behind me on the way up the stairs, and I led him to my new bedroom.

When we got in, I was immediately a little embarrassed. It was, after all, very messy. But he just started opening a box, completely ignoring how disastrous it was.

“Ya shoul' star' puttin' yer clothes up.” He instructed, and I jumped on it, picking them up off the floor and folding them before I put them into the dresser on the far side of the room.

“Oh, um... Actually, I wanted to rearrange a bit..” I said after I had filled an entire drawer. “I should probably do that before I put them up. They'll just make it heavier.” He looked at me, then shook his head.

“No. The boxes'll ge' in the way. Ah'll help ya move after we pu' everythin' up.” He said, and I gaped for a bit. I shook my head, as if to get all of my senses back in order. I had forgotten how good he was at taking charge.

So I continued picking up my clothes. If Su-San found a box that had clothes in it, he would send it my way. I chuckled to myself when I noticed that he didn't have to ask me where things went. I suppose I really haven't changed much at all. I put another shirt up, then realised that I was out of coathangers. I sighed, then went to go get some.

“I'll be right back. I gotta go ask mom for some more coathangers.” I called as I left, and I heard Su-San grunt in confirmation.

I went downstairs first, as that was where I had last seen her. To my dismay, she wasn't there, so I decided to try her room. No luck there either. My last hope was the bathroom.

But when I went to look, it too was empty. I went in, looking around as though she might be hiding. Nope, no mom. But I found a piece of paper on the counter. Curious, I picked it up. IT read as follows:

Dear Tino,

I went grocery shopping. Considering the fact that you actually found this means that you must be looking for coathangers. They are in my closet, in a box on the floor. Hope that your room is done when I get home! Good luck! Also, invite Berwald over for dinner. We're having his favorite, and his mom is out of town on a business trip. He can stay over if he likes. Alright, I love you honey.

Mom.

I glared at the note. I hated it when my mother was clever. But she had proved too many times before that she knew me inside and out, so I let it go and went to retrieve the coathangers. Like she had said, there was a box of them in her closet. I just took the whole thing, not wanting to have to come back for them. Hoisting it up, I made my way back to my room and pushed the door open. I found Su-San, just standing there with a picture frame in his hands. Again, my curiosity got the best of me.

“What are you looking at?” I asked him, setting the box on the floor. I guess I had startled him, because he jumped, just a little. “Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to scare you!” I gushed,

my brows knitting in worry. He shook his head and extended his arm to me, offering me the frame. I took it and looked, then smiled warmly. It was a picture of us together in front of our middle school. I looked absolutely terrified, though I had faked a smile, while he looked the same as usual, cool and collected. We hadn't even bothered trying to get him to smile. In fact, I don't think he's ever smiled for a single picture. EVER. Not even as a kid. Oh well, that's Su-San for you, I suppose.

"I still can't believe how long ago this was! Looking at old pictures makes me feel so old!" I exclaimed, handing him the picture. He took it, and added to a pretty large pile of stuff on my bed. "Um... Is there a reason all of this is on my bed? Are you trying to make a mountain or something?" I asked. He shook his head.

"We're gonna move stuff, so Ah don' wan' ta pu' it on the shelves." He explained, and I nodded in agreement.

"Alright, that was pretty smart. I gotta give you that one. And do you want to know what your reward is?" I asked, grinning. He looked at me a bit quizzically.

"Rear?" He countered, sounding a bit cautious. I chuckled.

"Yes. Your reward is a formal invite to dinner tonight. My mom left me a note and told me to ask you if you wanted to. She's making your favorite. She said you could stay over too, since your mom is out of town." I informed him, dropping my joking tone. He seemed to contemplate it, then directed his attention to me.

"Is tha' alright' with ya?" He asked me, causing me to blanch.

"Is that alright with... Um... You do realise how stupid that question is, right? Of course it is!" I proclaimed. He rubbed the back of his head, looking at me almost apologetically.

"Sorry. Ah didn' know if ya wanted some space." He said quietly. Now it was my turn to feel bad.

"Oh. No, I'm sorry. I... Are you wanting some time alone? I didn't mean to overcrowd you! I just... I was really excited to see you, so I... I'm sorry..." I rambled, but he cut me off.

"No. Ah didn' mean tha'. Ah jus' wanted ta make sure Ah wasn' overcrowdin' you." He assured me, coming over to me and pulling me into a hug. I gladly accepted it, relieved that I hadn't started a fight.

Well, actually, now that I think about it, I don't think that I've ever actually argued with Su-San. We never really have anything to disagree about, so it's never been an issue. I guess we're either too much alike, or just really lucky. Either way, it's nice. He let me go, and I smiled up at him.

"Is that a 'yes' then?" I asked, grinning stupidly. His lips twitched, and he nodded. My grin got even wider, and I went back to my clothes. There were several new boxes for me to deal with, and I groaned.

"Yer clothes 're never endin'." He deadpanned, to which I chuckled.

"Yeah, I know. A lot of them are just hand-me-downs from you and mom. But I guess I did do a lot of shopping when high school started... I couldn't keep wearing the same things forever!" I explained, putting more of my shirts on hangers and hanging them up. I organized them according to style, starting with tank-tops and ending with long-sleeved turtlenecks. We worked mostly in silence for the next few hours, only breaking it on the rare occasion when Su-San needed to ask me where I wanted him to put something. By the time I had finished with all of my clothes, my closet was practically bursting. I had to wonder how I had managed to fit all of this into my old, smaller closet... I guess it might have been the dirty clothes that I didn't have yet. After a few weeks here, my closet would seem significantly less crowded. When I turned around to get a start on whatever was left of the boxes, I was surprised to find that there were hardly any left to unpack.

Apparently, it took the same amount of time to unpack my clothes as it did to unpack all of my other belongings... That's sad...

"I really do have a lot of clothes..." I mumbled. Su-San looked at me, and nodded. "Alright, well, I'm done with that, so I'll help you finish up with these!" I announced, grabbing a box and ripping the tape off of it. It was full of my books, so I simply set it on the bed, with two more boxes of books. (Yes, I DO like to read, thank you for asking!)

We went on like that, and finally finished. The only thing left to do was move my furniture, and then stock the shelf. I turned to him, and smiled apologetically.

"Almost there! Thanks for the help, Su-San!" He nodded, and came to stand next to me.

"Where do ya wan' me ta move stuff?" He questioned. I looked around, contemplating it for the first time. After careful consideration, I started to give orders.

"I want my bed up against that corner," I said, pointing. "And I want the bookcase over there, next to that window. And the chair and lamp should go next to the bookcase." I finished, and he nodded obediently. He got to work on that quickly, taking the shelf first. He put it exactly where I had asked him to, right next to the window. After he did that, he looked out of the window briefly. He beckoned me over, and, ever the curious one, I came.

"Tha's mah room." He said, pointing to the house next door. To my surprise, this window was directly opposite a window into his room. I grinned.

"That's cool! Now I can talk to you whenever I want!" I said, and he looked at me.

"Ya don' hafta talk through the window... Ya can jus' come over. Ma doesn' care." He stated, effectively popping my childish little bubble.

"Aw... That takes the fun out of having opposite windows! Come on! At least once?" I asked, once again attempting the puppy dog eyes. He raised an eyebrow.

"Well, how ca' Ah say no?" He replied, and I lit up.

"Yay! This is exciting! When can we try it?" I asked, very much excited now.

"Tomorro' nigh', if ya wan'." He assured. I smiled giddily.

"Yes yes yes! This is going to be cool!" I said, still smiling like an idiot. He just stood up straight, and pointed to the bed.

"Star' puttin' stuff on the shelves. Ah'll move the chair. Then Ah'll ge' yer bed." He directed, and I nodded, going to my bed and grabbing a box of books. I started shoving them in, deciding to alphabetize them later. I got to all of the books before Su-San finished with the chair. All that was left was the picture frames and all of my little glass things. (Just pretty things to look at; figurines, statuettes, sculptures, that kind of stuff.)

I went to start bringing them over, and Su-San joined me, carrying them over and letting me arrange them as I saw fit. We cleared the bed pretty fast in this manner, and he started pushing it into the corner I had chosen.

"Oh! I can help you!" I called, feeling bad. He shook his head though.

"S'alrigh'." He responded, already having pushed it up against the wall. I looked at him thoughtfully.

"You know... You're a lot stronger than I remember... You picked me up yesterday too! Do you work out or something?" I inquired. He shook his head. "Hmm... Well, I guess I'm just pathetically wimpy, and your strength is therefore increased in my eyes! Oh Su-San! You're my muscly hero!" I cried, shifting my stance to look like one of those rabid Yaoi fangirls that you hear so much about.

That one actually earned me a small smile, to my immense surprise. This pleased me to no end, and I couldn't help but tackle-hug him. I would have tried to attach myself to his neck, but it just wasn't worth the effort. I mean, I would have had to jump! So I settled for just wrapping myself around his chest. He didn't seem to mind though, as he returned it. I stood

still for a moment, basking in the wonderfulness that is Su-San. Then I turned my face upwards.

“I'm tired.” I informed him. He released me, and I flopped onto the bed. “I mean, after such a long walk yesterday, on top of unpacking! My feet are aching!” I explained. He sat down next to me, nodding in understanding.

“Wan' a massage?” He asked, making me practically jump out of my skin. I hadn't been expecting that at all! I thought about it, not sure if I should accept. But, hey, who am I to refuse a free foot massage?

“Um... Sure.” I replied. He motioned for me to put my feet in his lap, and I obeyed.

Let me just say, there's a reason that Sweden is so famous for its' massages. As soon as he got to work, I felt like I was melting. All of the aching I had been feeling completely vanished, replaced by wonderfully soothing circles of pressure. I sighed and smiled, thoroughly satisfied.

“That feels amaaaaaaaazing.” I cooed. Opening my eyes for a second, I managed to catch the small little twitch, and it made me smile even more. He continued, and I relaxed into the pillows on my bed.

I don't really know exactly when my mind started wandering, but it did. A lot.

And what did I think of? What do you think? He was giving me a MASSAGE. Where does your brain go when YOU think of that?

Well, if you need the hint; I was thinking about where else he could massage. It started out innocently enough! It was just my shoulders first, then I thought about my back. Then my legs. Then... Well, I think you can guess.

Needless to say, I flushed, and whipped my legs down to the ground, sitting up. Su-San looked at me, surprise rather evident on his face.

“Fin?” He asked, and I offered him only a forced smile.

“S-sorry... I um... I feel better now! Thanks!” I stumbled. He stared at me for a moment, in which I almost broke into a sweat, but finally shrugged and stood.

“Ah think yer ma's home.” He informed me, and, sure enough, I heard the car door shut.

“Um, yeah! We should go help her bring in the groceries!” I said quickly, rushing out of the door. He followed close behind.

I wanted to hit myself for even remotely thinking about that! I mean, he was just being nice, and I, being the pervert that I apparently am, had to go and make it a dirty thing. I was still flushed from the whole thing. But, seeing my mom with arms overflowing with groceries quickly brought my attention away from the situation. After we ate dinner, which we all helped to prepare, it had practically disappeared from my mind completely. Well, for the moment, at least.

Chapter End Notes

Okay, well, as you can see, we are back to Tino's point of view! Sorry to all of you who liked Berwald's, but this story is supposed to be from Tino's POV. I just wanted to make sure that Berwald could be understood. Had to get a little more info on him, you know, stuff that Tino couldn't know.

Anyway, I hope I'm not boring you! This is literally turning into a day by day fic! I

usually cover a lot more time by now! But I don't know, I feel like I'm getting more out of it in the long run by doing this. Still, I promise we'll be getting to school soon! Like I said in chapter... Four? I think? Well, regardless, it's the end of August. Back to school approaching very fast!

Also, LOOK! First serious sexual reference! Aren't you excited? I'M EXCITED! (Sorry... I know it was actually pretty vague, but at least the feelings are getting stronger!) Finally getting to the point where that M rating is appropriate!

Here are the links, as per usual!

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

After we had finished dinner, mom said that she would do the dishes herself, letting me off the hook thanks to my 'company'. (It was technically my turn to fill the dish washer...)

Thankful, I rushed upstairs, trying to flee before she had the chance to change her mind. Su-San followed close behind, probably understanding my need to be away from the kitchen.

Once in my room, I closed the door, and breathed out a sigh of relief.

"Oh, thank god! I hate doing dishes!" I said, exasperated. I then turned to him. "So, um, what do you want to do?" I asked, looking around my room for some form of entertainment. Truth be told, my room was actually pretty ill-equipped to entertain. I didn't even have a TV. (This is because I hardly ever watch it. If I did, it was a movie, and those could be watched in the living room.) that's why we usually held sleepovers at Su-San's house. But we were here, so we had to figure something out.

"Wan' me to go ge' mah Xbox?" He asked me, and I lit up upon remembering that he did, indeed, have an Xbox.

"Yes! That's genius! Do you want me to come with you?" I inquired, to which he shook his head.

"Ah'll be righ' back. Go ge' the livin' room ready." He instructed, already on his way down the stairs. I followed him as far as the door, then waited for him to leave. After he was out the door, I turned and went back to the living room. It honestly didn't look very 'liveable' just yet, considering the fact that we hadn't had much time to unpack. Lucky for me, my mother had opted to plug the TV up, which saved me the trouble. I moved some things around so that it would be more convenient for us to play, then simply sat on the couch. My mother passed by, and gave me a look.

"Xbox?" She asked. I nodded, and she chuckled. "Alright, I'm going to bed. Try to keep it down. Love you honey."

"Love you too, mom." I called as she headed up the stairs. Yeah, I know that boys aren't supposed to tell their mothers that they love them. Well screw that! I do love her! She deserves to know!

I didn't wait very long before I heard Su-San come back through the door. I got up and went to the door. Just as I had suspected, he had brought EVERYTHING. Not only the Xbox, but every single game he owned. Which, believe it or not, is quite a lot. Enough to fill the rather large box that he was attempting to carry. I chuckled, and reached for it, pulling it out of his hand so that he wouldn't drop anything.

"Than's." He said, following me into the living room. I simply nodded, offering him a smile. I dropped the box on the coffee table.

"So... You're going to hook it up. Great!" I said, not really giving him a choice. Though I can hook things up, it takes me a lot longer than it does for him.

"Mhm. Pick a ga'e." He replied. I set to work, pulling them out of the box, a few at a time. There were definitely new ones, but I could recognize the majority of them. I contemplated, and narrowed it down to just a few. When I looked up, he was finished, and looking at me expectantly.

"Um... I don't know which one to play... Which one is your favorite out of these?" I asked,

pointing to them. He came to look at them, then pointed to one.

Of course it had to be the scariest looking of them all. Why had I even chosen that one to begin with? Well, I couldn't back out now! Left 4 Dead it was!

"Alright, let's play that one then!" I said, trying to sound enthusiastic. His eyebrow raised a fraction.

"s scary." He informed me. I groaned internally, but nodded for him.

"I know... LET'S DO IT! I'm older now! I can handle it!" I assured him. He kept looking at me, as if looking for an indication that I was lying. Seeming to find none, he put the game in, and handed me a controller. I sat down, trying to brace myself for what was about to ensue.

Are you confused? I guess I should give you a little explanation. As you can probably guess, I don't do very well with horror. The last time my mom tried to get me to watch a horror film with her, (and a wimpy one at that!) I ran out crying. Literally. TEARS. DOWN MY FACE.

Needless to say, I haven't seen a lot of scary movies.

But I had to look more mature for Su-San! I mean, if I couldn't even play a stupid video game, how would I ever show my face again? I needed to be strong! I could do this! They were just badly animated zombies! They weren't that scary!

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So I told myself.

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"AAAAH! HOLY CRAP! WHERE DID THAT COME FROM! SU-SAN! HELP ME! OH MY GOD! IT JUST STUCK ITS TONGUE THROUGH ME! SU-SAAAAAN! HOLY SH-CRAP! WHAT IS THAT? THAT ONE'S ATTACKING ME TOO! IT JUST THREW UP ON ME!" I was screaming, frantically pushing buttons, desperately fighting off the urge to run away. Despite what I had told myself, the graphics were incredibly detailed, and this game was scaring the shit out of me. But would I admit it? NO!

"Hol' on Fin! I'm commin'!" He said, trying to reassure me. But before he could get there, I heard the music for the really big zombie, and I couldn't help myself; As soon as I saw him, I dropped the controller and ran. I was done. I figured Su-San would finish the game by himself. He didn't need me, after all. Frankly, all I had done up to that point was scream, run around in circles, accidentally run TOWARDS a zombie when I was supposed to run AWAY from it (this somehow got Su-San killed... I don't know how...), and get attacked by random zombies, needing help every two seconds.

But to my surprise, as soon as I ran, Su-San had gotten up and followed me, all the way to the kitchen.

"Wh-what are you doing! You're going to die!" I exclaimed. He didn't seem to hear me though; He was staring at me intently instead. "S-Su-San?" I asked, not sure what he was doing.

"Are ya okay?" He asked me, still scrutinizing my face. I spaced out for a moment, overwhelmed by the intensity of his stare.

"U-Um... What?" I asked stupidly, shaking my head to rid it of confusion. "Oh, um, yeah! I'm fine! Sorry, I just got a little overwhelmed! I mean, there were three of them all at once! I got

flustered!" I gushed, refusing to make eye contact. He listened, then wrapped his arms around me, pulling me into his chest. I gasped a bit, still jumpy from the game, and not expecting the affection.

"Ah told ya it was scary." He said, and I frowned, though he couldn't see.

"I know... I'm sorry." I said miserably. He sighed, and I felt the warm breath in my hair. It was surprisingly comforting. I looked up, smiling apologetically.

"Um... We could go try again, if you want?" I offered. He simply shook his head, and let me go. He gestured back towards the living room, and I followed him, though still wary of the game.

Not surprisingly, it said game over. I felt bad for making him lose, but he didn't really seem to mind it too much. He removed it, and returned it to its case before replacing it in the box.

"Do ya wan' ta play 'nother one?" He asked me. I looked at the clock, and decided it was late enough.

"Um... That was enough excitement for me, thank you. It's pretty late, and unpacking kind of wore me out." I answered sheepishly. He nodded, and turned everything off.

"Le's go ta bed." He confirmed. I smiled, thankful, and started heading up the stairs. He followed behind me closely and closed the door once we were in my room. Without even thinking, I headed over to my dresser to pull out pajamas. Then, as I thought about it, I realised that Su-San most likely didn't have any. I hadn't seen any when he had brought the Xbox in, and he hadn't brought anything with him when he came over in the morning to help unpack. I turned, and looked at him. Sure enough, he was just standing there, staring at the bookshelf.

"Um, Su-San?" I said quietly, succeeding in grabbing his attention. "Do you have any Pjs?" I asked. He shook his head. I bit my lip, trying to come up with a solution to the problem.

"Uh... Do you want to go grab some?" I finally gave in, falling to the worse case scenario. "I mean, I'd offer you some of mine, but I doubt they'd fit." I explained. He simply shook his head.

"Ah'll jus' sleep in mah boxers, if ya don' mind." He replied, causing me to flush immediately. Why? Where have you been?! My love? Su-San? In only his boxers?

"U-u-um, th-that's fine! I mean, w-we're both g-guys after all!" I struggled to stutter out. He looked at me, his concern evident.

"Fin? Are ya 'kay?" He asked, and I forced myself to calm down.

"Yeah. Sorry... It's fine!" I said, trying to comfort myself more than him. Yes. I would be fine! I could handle it! We've been sleeping together for years! And I've seen him in a lot less, so what was there to worry about? So, this in mind, I turned around and started to strip down. I assumed that he did the same, as was pretty much expected of people that change at the same time. After I had succeeded in putting on my shorts and t-shirt, I turned, and almost regretted doing it. Almost.

He was, as he had said, in only his boxers. Again I was faced with the sight of an incredibly ripped looking chest. And I noticed that his abdomen was toned as well... Well, all of him was toned, but the six pack kind of overpowered everything else... Wait... did he always have that? Um...

"Fin? Fin? Hej!" I jumped, and shook my head a little.

"Huh? What? What's wrong?" I asked stupidly, trying to remember what I was doing. He stared at me, rather hard, then shook his head.

"Nothin'. Ya jus' spaced ou' a bit." He explained, and I blushed. Good thing he can't read minds...

"Yeah, sorry... I was just thinking about... How much I missed you?" I tried, assuming I had

failed at reasoning. But his stare softened, and he came to my side.

“Ah missed ya too, Fin.” He assured me, ruffling my hair gently. I was a little disappointed that I hadn't gotten a hug, but I figured it was because he was so close to being naked... That probably would have been a little too far from his comfort zone, and, honestly, my breaking limit. I don't think I'd be able to handle myself if he were that close to me with so little on. So I smiled and accepted the gesture.

“Alright, let's go to bed! I'm exhausted!” I exclaimed, flinging myself into my bed. I was pleased with the feeling of the plush coming up to meet me, and sighed gratefully. I was comfortable enough to fall asleep right then and there! Or rather, I was comfortable enough to forget about a certain something... The lights went out, and I couldn't help the little jump. How had that happened?

“Scoo' over.” Su-San instructed me, snapping me back to reality. I flushed, and moved over next to the wall, making room for him to get in.

“Sorry! I forgot that I was sharing for a sec!” I explained, pulling the blanket up over my shoulder as I rolled to lay on my side.

“s okay.” He said, putting his glasses on my night stand, then turning to face me. I was thankful that our eyes hadn't adjusted to the dark just yet, so he wouldn't be able to see me blush. I couldn't help but wonder what exactly it was that Su-San was thinking about right now. Despite being able to read his emotions most of the time, I still have trouble guessing what he's thinking. I wondered if he ever thought of me, like I thought of him, all the time. In fact, I don't think there is ever really a time that I'm not thinking of him, though I may not even notice that I am... It's become such a normal part of my life, half the time I'm not even aware of doing it.

As my eyes adjusted, slow as possible, Su-San's face gradually came into focus. He had his eyes closed, and I wondered if he had already fallen asleep.

“Su-San?” I called softly, not wanting to wake him if he WAS asleep. “Are you asleep?” His eyes opened.

“No.” He replied simply. I chuckled.

“I can see that.” I said, smiling at him fondly. “Hey, thanks again for helping me out today. I owe you!” I said quietly, not wanting to get too loud and break the relaxed mood.

“Nah. Happ' ta help.” He assured, making me smile even wider. I yawned, signalling that I really WAS tired. I guess my excuse was actually pretty good!

“Well, thanks anyway. Hyvää yötä, Su-San.” I whispered, letting my eyes flutter shut.

“God natt.” He replied, just as quietly. The last thing I remembered was smiling at how familiar and wonderful it felt to hear the Swedish phrase again after three years.

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I woke up with a start. I didn't know the exact reason why I was awake, all I knew was that it was something loud. Looking around, I gathered that it was much too dark for it to be morning, and, upon glancing at my alarm clock, this was confirmed. It was two in the morning.

Upon making a sweep of my room with my eyes, I couldn't locate anything that would cause a sound loud enough to wake me up. The only thing that was making noise at all was Su-San's breathing, and that definitely wouldn't have woken me up. Utterly confused, I sat up, doing my best not to move the bed too much. Was mom up doing something? But she always slept like a log... A robber? I would surely hope not...

Then my whole world went white for a split second, and I finally understood. I yelped in fear,

and hid my face in my pillow, anticipating what was guaranteed to happen.

Sure enough, not three seconds later, a crack rang out through the entire house, loud enough to make it shake, then slowly faded into a dull rumble before disappearing all together. As the deafening crash first hit, I moaned into the pillow, trying so hard not to scream. I felt the bed shake, and I wondered if thunder could really make it move that much. Had it caused an earthquake? Almost immediately, a second clap came, and I burst into tears, whimpering pathetically.

Obviously, I'm not so good with storms. It's not so much the lightning that gets to me, just the massive amount of thunder. You'd never really guess it by looking at me, but I have a serious fear of all things loud. They throw me into a panic, and panic eventually turns to full on fear. And thunder has always been the very worst for me. Along with guns. I can shoot them myself, because I'm expecting the sound, but I can't be near anyone else who is shooting one. Pathetic, I know.

But that would explain why I'm currently reduced to a sniveling mess. When I get around to really fearing something, I become completely useless. Once, when Su-San and I were on the road, heading towards our vacation spot, we had to stop in a small town to grab a bite to eat. Unluckily enough for me, the place was right next to a shooting range. It was inside, so I didn't hear the little pistols, but, as I learned later, someone decided to shoot off a shotgun. I heard that one. And dropped what I was eating. And burst into tears. And cowered underneath the table. It took Su-San thirty minutes to coax me out so that we could get back to the car.

But even guns can't hold a match to thunder. I'm not only scared of the sound, but also the possibility of a tornado that the storm itself can bring. If sirens go off, well, frankly, I start to REALLY scream. I probably match the pitch of the siren, if we're being honest. Anyway, back to me crying like a baby.

After the second crash, the one that caused me to start crying, I considered running. I didn't know where I would go, I just always had the urge to run when I was scared. A third one resounded, and I let out a wail, still concentrating all of my fear into my pillow. The tears started to pour out heavier, and I was shaking.

I jumped half a foot off the bed when I felt something touch my back. I looked up in terror, not sure exactly what I was expecting.

"Fin? Hey, tal' ta me! Fin?" I tried to remember what the words meant, tried to remember what was saying them, WHO was saying them. I couldn't form coherent thought around the mind-splitting fear. Another flash illuminated a concerned face, followed closely by complete darkness and the impending explosion. I screamed, and flung myself forward, needing to move, not caring where. I tried to jump off of the bed, so that I could run, somewhere, anywhere; but I found that I was restricted. Something was holding me, forcing me to stay there.

"Fin! Listen ta me! Fin!" The same voice called. Fin? Who was Fin? Was that me? Then the same voice again. "Co'e on Fin! Tal' ta me!" Talk? Talk to him? Who? Talk to who? "Fin! Ti'o! I's me! It's Ber'ald! Su-San!" And it clicked.

I was Tino. He was Su-San. There was a storm outside. We were in my room. I was terrified. "Su-San!" I cried, burying my face into his chest, trying to somehow block out the storm that was raging outside. "Su-San! Please! I-I... I can't... I..." I was cut off by another sharp dissonance. I cried out yet again, but it was muffled as I was pulled tighter against him, his arms wrapped almost painfully around my frame.

"Fin, Shhhh." He whispered quietly, breathing hotly into my hair. My heart was beating so fast, my breaths coming out in short gasps and pants. "S alrigh!" He tried, wanting to

reassure me. I could only cry. Another one, and I was squirming in another attempt to run. "Fin, tha's no' gonna help. Shhhh. Jus' calm dow'... 'S alrigh'." He said, holding me that much tighter.

"Su-San! Please! I-I can't stay here! I need... I need... Su-San..." Yet another crash, this one sounding a little farther off. I whimpered, fresh tears falling.

"Shhh... 'm righ' here." He assured, rubbing little circles into my back.

"I...I" I stuttered, not sure exactly what I was trying to say.

"S jus' a little stor'. I's almos' over. Shhh..." He cooed soothingly. I stopped shaking, but I couldn't stop crying. He squeezed me tighter when another bang sounded, even quieter than the last.

"See? Shhhh..." He whispered, forcing me to lay down with him, his arms still around me protectively. I refused to let go, clinging tightly as the rest of the storm rode itself out. I eventually stopped yelping every time the thunder came, quieting to gasps, then eventually got down to simply jumping when I heard it.

Finally, the thunder stopped, leaving only the quiet pitter-patter of the rain. We stayed like that, him still rubbing circles into my back, while I tried to calm down. My pattern of thought slowly returned, and I remembered at last exactly what was going on. I realised how pathetic I had just been, and I was horribly embarrassed.

"Su-San?" I whispered, my voice hoarse from screaming and crying. He shifted a bit, loosening his hold on me. I figured he was looking down at me, but I refused to make eye contact, too disgusted with myself to face him. "I'm so sorry." I apologized, fresh tears springing up. He sat up, pulling me into a sitting position as well.

"There's nothin' ta be sorry 'bou'." He proclaimed, putting a finger underneath my chin and pulling my face up to meet his stare. I still refused to look at him, looking to my right instead. He wiped at my eyes, trying to get rid of the still pouring tears.

"Fin, 's alrigh'." He reiterated, hugging me tightly before standing up. I looked at him, confused. Was he going to leave? I couldn't really blame him after how badly I just freaked out.

"Come on." He took my hand, trying to pull me out of the bed.

"Huh?" I blinked stupidly, but got up.

"Le's go clean ya up." He said, and I nodded, allowing him to lead me to the bathroom. Once I was inside, he closed the door and turned the light on. He checked to make sure that the lid was down on the seat before having me sit on it. I did so, and spaced out. I had stopped crying, but now I was exhausted. I had, after all, been woken up in the middle of the night, ON TOP of the crying.

He wiped my eyes again, this time with toilet paper, then wiped my nose. I took it from him, and blew, clearing my nose of anything that had accumulated while I was crying. I threw the paper in the trash, then got a little start when I felt something cold press against my face. Looking up, I found that it was a washcloth that Su-San had run cold water over. I smiled at him halfheartedly, and took it, pressing it to my heated forehead. He knelt down so that he was just below me, and looked up into my eyes.

"ow do ya feel?" He asked, rubbing circles into the back of my free hand with his thumb. I thought about it, and shrugged.

"Really tired. And I have a headache. Other than that, I think I'm okay." I reported, and he sighed.

"I though' ya were gonna make yersel' sick." He informed me, making me flush a bit. It wouldn't be the first time.

"I'm so sorry Su-San. I-I had no idea it was going to storm tonight. I wouldn't have had you

over if I had known.” I said quietly. He shook his head.

“The' no one 'ould be 'ere ta help ya.” He reasoned as he took the cloth back and ran it under the water again.

“No, but at least you wouldn't have seen me like that. I'm sorry that I freak out so bad.” I sighed, accepting the rag again.

“Ya can' help wha' yer scared o'.” He said, returning to my hand.

“But no one else freaks out as much as I do.” I retorted. He just kept staring.

“Ye', they do. Ya jus' don' know 'em.” He got back up, opening the mirror that was hanging above the sink. He took a bottle out, opened it, then handed me some pills. “Fer yer headache.” He explained, and I took them gratefully. With nothing to drink anywhere close, I opted to just swallow them dry. After I had done so, he gestured for me to follow him once again. He shut off the light as we left, then took me back to my room. As we entered, he laid on the bed first, then gestured for me to come and lay down next to him. I did, feeling relieved to be laying down again.

“Fin, are ya 'kay?” He asked, encircling me in his arms and pulling me close.

“Yeah.” I answered simply, relaxing into the comfort once again. “Really tired though.”

“Alrigh'. Go ta sleep.” He instructed. I closed my eyes, happy to comply. All I wanted at this point was to sleep off all of the night's activities, and to relieve this awful headache that the crying had induced. I knew I was going to be out in a few minutes, but I would be lying if I said that I didn't enjoy the feeling of those circles being rubbed gently into my back.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry if this is random, as I know it is. And sorry if it is full of errors and typos... I can barely see straight. But don't think that I didn't do this on purpose. I was trying to make the last part seem very jumbled and panicked. I thought it would add to the atmosphere if you were confused. Cause I tend to panic when I get confused, soooooo...

Anyway, I think we got to learn a little bit more about Tino this time around, hmm? His fears at least... Truth be told, the storm part was inspired by the storm currently raging outside... Funny thing though: I love storms! I used to be terrified of them as a child, and I was almost as bad as Tino! But after living in Japan, and having “typhoon season” I am much less fearful of them. Tornadoes still freak me out though.

For anyone curious, I'll be vacationing in Florida starting tomorrow, so the next update won't be until I get back. Hope you see you then, and as always here come the links!

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

I woke, for the second time, to a knock on the door. My eyes shot open, and I groaned when I was met with bright light. It was definitely morning now, but I still felt sleep deprived.

Perhaps having a panic attack at two in the morning had something to do with that...

I heard the knock again, and was coherent enough to know that it was my mother. But I didn't exactly know how I was supposed to respond. Currently, I was pressed against Su-San's chest, held tight enough that I couldn't move away without waking him. I wondered how on earth he was still asleep, but let that take a back burner when I realised that the chest I was being held to was, to my embarrassment (...delight...), bare. I had completely disregarded this fact the night before, too panicked and then tired to really notice it. But I was noticing it now, that's for sure.

"Tino!"

Oh, right, mom's outside the door. I had no clue what I could do. Should I call to her? But that would wake up Su-San! But would it really, if her calling and knocking hadn't already? I decided to just do it. If you ignore my mom for too long, bad things can happen to you.

"Yeah mom?" I called. To my surprise, Su-San still didn't stir. Mom took my voice as her cue, and opened the door. I could just barely see her over Su-San's arms.

"There was a storm last night!" She exclaimed, apparently not phased by the fact that I was being held like that. She looked at Su-San, who was still asleep, and lowered her voice. "Are you alright? Did you wake up?" She asked, her concern reminding me why it was I loved my mother so much.

"Um, yeah, I did. But Su-San was there, so I'm okay." I replied. She looked at him again, and nodded.

"I can see that." She said, smiling. "Tino, he's a really good friend." She informed me, and I rolled my eyes.

"You're just now realising this?" I asked, and she gave me a playful glare.

"No. I'm just reminded of it every time I see him." She explained, turning around to head out.

"Breakfast will be ready in about twenty minutes. Oh, and next time I tell you to 'keep it down' try not to scream like a little girl every few seconds, okay?" She said, closing the door to avoid anything I could say back. I flushed, and glared at the chest in front of me as if it was the one that had called me a girl. The chest, to my surprise, seemed to respond to my glare.

"Well, ya did screa' a lo'." It pointed out. I gasped, and my eyes widened. Chests aren't supposed to talk! I heard a little scoff, and looked up.

"Oh! Su-San! You're awake! Thank god! I thought your chest was talking to me!" I informed him, then blushed when I realised how stupid that sounded. "Um, we're going to pretend that I did NOT just say that. You know how I am in morning! You have to cut me a break!" I pleaded, and he ruffled my hair.

"Sure." He said simply, dropping the arm he had used so that was dangling lazily over my waist. I looked down again, trying to hide the flush that I knew was all over my face.

"Thanks." I said lowly, then gasped when I was pulled in closer. I looked up in question of the actions, and was met with only the normal stare. "What...?"

"Mornin'?" It was more of a question than a greeting, and it made me chuckle.

"Good morning." I replied, returning the hug. To my glee it lasted longer than I had expected. But like all things, good and bad, it had to come to an end. He released me, and sat up. I followed suit, stretching my arms up to relieve the stress of having slept on my side most of the night. Which reminded me...

"Hey, Su-San? How did you sleep last night?" I asked, having remembered that he had stayed up with me during the storm.

"side from whe' Ah was up with ya? Fine." He said, making me feel bad all over again.

"I'm sorry..." I mumbled, cursing the storm for the trouble it had caused, but cursing myself even more for freaking out about it so badly. He glanced at me, then pulled me into another hug.

"Ah was kiddin' Fin. 't's alrigh'. Ya shoul' know by now tha' Ah'm used to it." He insisted, letting me go and brushing the hair that had fallen out of my eyes. I smiled gratefully, though it was a bit pained.

"Well... I... I appreciate it, I really do... I just... I don't think it's right that you should have to put up with it." I confided. He shook his head, pulling my chin up so that I had to look at him.

"E'ery rela'ionship requires sa'rifices. This is har'ly anythin' compared to everythin' ya've done fer me." He returned, making me blush.

"But you're the one that's always doing ME favors! Like taking me to the beach, and helping me unpack, and..." He cut me off, which struck me as rather assertive for the usually silent man I had fallen for.

"An' ya've been mah friend fer more than te' years." He countered. I scowled, getting ready to throw that one right back to him because, after all, he had been mine for the same amount of time! But my mother called up the stairs, informing us that breakfast was ready, and if we weren't down in ten minutes she would eat our share. Needless to say, we both scrambled to get out of bed. He pulled on his clothes from the day before, and I couldn't help but watch the fabric with a little bit of jealousy. I mean, it got to grace every inch of Su-San for two days straight! Wouldn't you be jealous? No? I'm weird? I thought that we had already covered that...

He looked at me, and gestured towards the door. I smiled and followed him out, going down into the kitchen. My mother was waiting there, our plates already made for us.

"Ah, look, they rise! Morning Berwald. Tino, Honey, you realise that your hair looks like it's been through a hurricane, yes?" She asked sarcastically. Su-San gave her a grunt of acknowledgment, then sat down. I followed suit, sticking my tongue out at my mother.

"It always does." I replied, though my face still heated at the thought of Su-San seeing me in such a terrible state. Oh well, he's used to it, I suppose.

"Berwald, your mother will be coming home tonight. She asked me to tell you that, since you don't have a cell phone. And, Tino, there is your proof that you aren't the only teenager without one." She finished triumphantly. I groaned.

"THAT ISN'T FAIR! SU-SAN SHOULDN'T GET TO COUNT!" I exclaimed, receiving raised eyebrows on both ends.

"An' why don' Ah ge' ta count?" He asked. I flushed, realising my mistake.

"Oh! U-Um... Well you... You've always been... Different than other people? Like... The type that wouldn't want a cellphone..." I trailed, feeling bad for saying anything in the first place.

"Ah don't really wan' one." He confirmed.

"HA! YOU SEE! HE DOESN'T GET TO COUNT!" I reiterated, my argument stronger in my eyes. My mom just rolled her eyes and dropped her plate into the sink.

"That still doesn't mean that I'm getting you one." She replied. I sighed, hitting my head on the breakfast bar.

"Come on! I'm sixteen!" I reasoned, but had already given up and started eating.

"...Alright then. You can have one." She said, and I nearly dropped my fork in surprise.

"Seriously?!" I asked, dumbfounded that my argument had worked.

"Yes. As soon as you get a job and buy yourself one." She replied, making me groan in frustration.

"That isn't fair!"

"How many times have I told you? Life isn't fair, honey. Now finish breakfast. We're going school shopping today." She informed me, successfully confusing me.

"Huh? Why?" I asked stupidly.

"Tino... School starts in two days..." She responded. I thought about it, and gasped.

"IT DOES! I COMPLETELY FORGOT!!!!" I cried. I can't say that I was looking forward to this at all. School had never been a fun experience for me, after all.

"Yes, it does. And we're going shopping today."

"Um... Can't I go by myself?" I inquired. She shook her head.

"No. You don't know the town well enough yet." She said, an edge of finality to her words. I resigned myself to my fate, though I definitely wasn't happy about it. Luckily for me, Su-San came to my rescue.

"Ms. Väinämöinen? Ah can take 'im. Ah nee' some stuff too." He stated, to which my mother smiled.

"Would you? That would probably be better, truth be told. I have a lot I have to do this week. I can go do that while you two are shopping. But are you sure? Aren't you tired of him yet?" She asked. He simply shook his head, for which I was grateful. She grinned. "Alright, thank you, Berwald. You know, sometimes I wish YOU were my son!" She gushed, and I scoffed.

"I AM still here, you know?" I growled, making her laugh.

"Oh, you know I love you! Here's some money!" She said, grabbing a few bills out of her purse and handing them to me. "You make sure that you buy shoes, clothes, and school supplies! That isn't for you! I want the change. If I come home and you have a cell phone, I'm going to be pissed." She informed me. "Alright, well, I'm going to go ahead. Thank you again, Berwald! I love you honey!" And with that, she closed her purse and was out the door. We both watched as she walked out the door, and I think even Su-San was a bit baffled by how quickly her life progressed. Eating breakfast, then walking out the door in five seconds flat... That woman had skills, needless to say. I shook my head in a bid to remove the thought from my mind and turned to Su-San who, apparently, recovered a lot faster than I had, and was eating again.

"Thanks! You saved me from the embarrassment of walking around store after store trying on clothes for my mom." I remarked, and he turned to raise an eyebrow. "Oh, I know, it doesn't sound too bad in theory. Not until you get to the fifth store. Then you start to question her humanity, and wonder why in the world you have a skirt on." To this his brows furrowed.

"Oh, I'm serious. I've put on dresses before too... I swear she is either under the impression that she had a girl sixteen years, or is convinced that she can somehow change my gender if she just dresses me up like a girl enough." That part got me a twitch of the lips.

Honestly, I think my mother WAS pretty disappointed when I came out. She was seriously expecting me to be a girl, but I was born with a little something "extra". That's why I humor her in her endeavors to dress me up. I mean, it's the least I can do, considering that she still took me home and fed me, even though she had to repaint my room. Yeah, it was pink for the first three years... Maybe that's why I turned out gay... Hmm...

But, yes, she took me home, and she loved me. Even though I was a boy, even though I was a mistake. So I owe her big time, big enough to override the embarrassment of wearing a dress for a minute or so. And frankly, they are rather comfortable! I can see why girls wear them! But I also have to admit that I would freak out if I was walking around with nothing between my legs... Just... Too... Ugh...

I jumped when I heard a clatter, and snapped from my thoughts. Su-San was standing at the sink, and I gathered that he had finished eating. I looked down at my plate and noticed that my food too was dwindling. I shoved the last few bites into my mouth, chugged my glass of orange juice, then added both dishes to the pile.

"Alright! You ready to go?" I asked, surprised when he shook his head. "No?" I asked, uncertain of what the issue was. He gestured to himself, and I looked, still confused. Was he offering? Oh, wait, no, I was awake right now... That doesn't happen in reality. I just furrowed my brows causing him to sigh quietly.

"Ah need ta shower, an' Ah need ta change." He informed me. My eyes widened, and I blushed.

"O-oh, yeah! Me too..." I admitted, flushing at having forgotten such an important part of my day.

"Ah'll go home, ta'e a shower, the' Ah'll mee' ya back here." He decided, and I smiled.

"Sure! I'll try to hurry!" I agreed, waving as he left. Once he was gone, I sighed, already missing his presence. I guess I was going through withdrawal?

I forced myself into action, going up the stairs as fast as I could without a fear of tripping. I grabbed a change of clothes from my room, then bolted back to the bathroom. I loved to take long showers, so it was going to be a challenge to speed the process up. But for Su-San, anything is possible!

I turned the water on, reminding myself that I didn't need to turn the hot on as much as at my old house. (Getting burned the day before definitely left a nasty little reminder in my mind...)

I stripped down while the water was running, allowing it to heat up so that I wouldn't be sprayed with cold water when I got in. I pulled the diverter that switched it to a shower, and got in. I shuddered at the temperature change, but soon relaxed. I sighed, and let it pour over my head, enjoying the feeling of having water going through my hair.

Then I remembered that I was supposed to be hurrying. I started to scrub at my hair, getting it wet all the way to the roots, then poured shampoo in and got to work. I think I can spare you the details. You all bathe, I'm sure... Or I guess I should say that I hope...

I got out, feeling proud with myself for taking a speed shower. I rubbed the towel through my hair in a bid to get it to stop dripping, then rubbed at my shoulders. After I was satisfied with that, I wrapped it around my waist, and brushed my teeth. Strange routine, I know, but it gave the rest of my body some time to dry off, and I got my teeth clean. Two birds with one stone. After finishing with that, I rubbed the rest of my body off, just to make sure that I was completely dry, and grabbed at my fresh set of clothes. I pulled my underwear on, then quickly covered them with the shorts I had grabbed. (Wondering if I wear boxers or briefs? I'll leave that to your imagination.) I noticed that these too used to be a pair of Su-San's jeans, and I had cut them off into shorts. I really did get too many of my outfits from him... I went to pull my shirt over my head, but I hesitated. It didn't look right...

Upon further investigation, I realised that it was my mother's shirt. You know when you know you live a sad, gender confused life? When you can mistake your mother's clothes as your own... And you're a boy. I groaned, glaring at the article as if I could make it feel bad for finding its way into my closet.

Well, I really didn't plan on wearing the shirt, so I had to go grab another. I hung my towel up

on the bar, not really needing it anymore. As I left the bathroom, I threw the shirt into my mom's room, not really caring where it fell, considering it was a traitor and had tried to sabotage me. Yeah... I know I have issues with personification... I swear the toaster yells back sometimes!

That accomplished, I went to my room to fetch one of my 'manly' shirts. (Which were equal in femininity to my mother's shirt, but at least they were MY feminine shirts!) I opened my door, and almost shut it again with surprise. I mean, Su-San was sitting on my bed! Come on! I wasn't expecting that!

"O-Oh! Su-San! You scared me!" I stuttered, blushing at the feeling of being shirtless in front of him yet again. "Um, did I keep you waiting too long?" I asked, going to my closet to find a shirt, moving a little faster than was truly necessary. I waited for a reply, but got none at all. After finally deciding on and pulling on one of my gamer shirts, I turned to him, wondering if something was wrong. I flushed when I found that he was staring at me, and fidgeted uncomfortably with my shirt. Did I look stupid?

"Su-San? I-Is something wrong?" I asked, running fingers through my hair to assure that it wasn't sticking up oddly. He furrowed his brows, then blinked rapidly for a moment.

"Wha'?" He asked me finally, and I raised an eyebrow.

"Well, first I asked if I kept you waiting, then I asked if something was wrong... Are you feeling okay?" I repeated, concern lacing the last words.

"Y-Yeah. Sorr'. No, Ah jus' go' here righ' before ya got ou'. And nothin's wrong. Sorr' fer worryin' ya." He assured me, standing up. I was confused, but decided not to push my luck.

"Alright... I need to brush my hair real fast, So I'll be right back." I told him I and ran back to the bathroom to do so. After I dubbed my hair acceptable, I went back out and found him waiting at the top of the stairs.

"Rea'y?" He questioned, and I nodded, proceeding to follow him down the stairs. I grabbed the money that I had left on the counter and pocketed it, then pulled my shoes on. He brought me back to his car, and I again had to take a moment to register that he actually OWNED a car at all. After I gaped for a little longer, I ducked into the passenger's seat, and waited patiently for him to start it and get us moving on our way towards... Wherever we where going. I guess I really didn't know.

"Um... Su-San? Where are we going to go?" I asked, watching as the front of the car quickly ate the road. (Haha, poetic moment! Proof that even I, Tino Väinämöinen, could be a poet! That was my fancy way of saying "we had started moving". Did you enjoy it?) He glanced at me, then turned back to the road.

"Ah was gonna go ta Wal'art firs', ta ge' the supplies. Then I figured we coul'd go wherever ya wan'ed ta get clothes." He replied, looking at me for approval. I smiled.

"Sounds like a plan! Did you grab any money to get your stuff?" I asked, and he nodded.

"Hmm... Where do you want to do to get clothes?" He simply shrugged.

"Ah don' really need clothes. Jus' some school stuff." He said, to which I scowled.

"That isn't any fun! The whole point of school shopping is to get your parents to buy you clothes!" I exclaimed, nearly missing the twitch of the lips.

"Ah really don' think ya need any more clothes." He announced, and I flushed.

"Well, half of the stuff in there is stuff you gave me! I've gotta get my own clothes too!" I pointed out. He gave me a nod as he pulled into the parking lot of Walmart.

"Su'e ya do, Fin."

Chapter End Notes

Another day, another dollar. Or, in this case, another chapter. Well, I don't have too much to say at the moment, so thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

Here are the links: Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Getting supplies was a rather uneventful process. I mean, it doesn't take very much effort to throw some pencils, pens, paper, folders, and a binder into a cart. The only thing of interest that happened was that Su-San insisted that I pick out a lunchbox. I was puzzled about this, having eaten school food since I had started. He explained to me that the school here served food that literally MOVED on its own. The Jello, he said, was especially dangerous. He instructed me to pick a bag, and then he would pack a lunch for me in the morning.

That just proves that he knows me much too well. The fact that he knows how hard it is for me to cook, and how impossible it is for me to cook anything edible. I just shrugged and picked out a light blue colored one, with simple patterns along the front. It wasn't anything extravagant, just a lunchbox. Su-San nodded at my selection, and we went to the check out and paid, taking our bags out to the car.

Things started to get interesting around the time we arrived at the mall. Having just moved here, I had never been to the mall. Even just looking at it, I could tell how much bigger it was than the strip mall in my old town had been. After hopping out of the car enthusiastically, I had to pause and ask myself exactly what I was doing. Truth be told, I was completely lost. Even if I did run inside thinking I could figure it out, I would eventually end up walking in circles, then have to ask someone for directions to the nearest exit. The first time my mother dropped me off at our old mall, I had done that. I was in tears by the time my mother came to pick me up, and, needless to say, I never went by myself again.

After thinking about it, I decided I would wait for Su-San as opposed to rushing in head first. Perhaps I wouldn't get in as fast, but at least I wouldn't be hopelessly lost! To my relief he didn't take too long getting out of the car. I bounced on the balls of my feet while I waited for him to join me behind the car. When he did, I immediately started walking.

"Are ya tha' ex'ited fer clothes?" He asked me, his long legs keeping pace with my quick little steps easily. I smiled, nodding.

"Yeah! I don't really have any summer clothes, like shorts or anything, so I need to get some!" I explained, adjusting the cutoffs so that they rested on my hips again, deciding to buy a belt as well.

"But yer wearin' shorts righ' now..." He pointed out, and I chuckled.

"These used to be a pair of your jeans! They don't count!" I reasoned, then sighed in joy when the cool air conditioning hit my skin. I hadn't realised that I had been sweating, and was thankful that I had remembered to put on deodorant before we left.

As I had expected, the second we walked in, I was hopelessly lost. The only thing I could see was food. Looking around, I tried to figure out why Su-San had brought me to what appeared to be a huge building full of restaurants.

"This is the foo' cour'. He explained, leading me to an archway in the middle of it all. Upon going through it, I found myself to be relieved. I could see stores lining the sides of the hallways, just like I was used to. I smiled, and started looking around, trying to decide which store to go into first. Some of these stores were familiar to me, others were a brand new world all together. I turned to him, and gave a playful smirk.

"You realise that we're going to be here for a while, right?" I asked, feigning innocence. He

raised an eyebrow, making me giggle. "You've entered a mall with me. We aren't leaving until we can't walk anymore!" I announced, then pulled him into a store. He didn't seem to mind the thought too much, and followed me in.

To my good fortune, the first store I had chosen was actually quite to my taste. The shirts were like the ones that I usually bought, and the jeans were skinny. I went into shopping mode, making a beeline for clearance. Some people say that this means that you are cheap and broke. I beg to differ. In my opinion, it shows that you are smart. If you play your cards right, you can get twice the amount of clothes for the same price, and they aren't any different that if you had bought them at full price.

I pulled about five pairs of jeans off the rack, some of them a little bigger than my size. It never hurts to have extra room! I took some shirts too, then went and asked for a dressing room. Su-San simply followed me around like a puppy through all of this, and took a seat outside of the dressing rooms as I went in. I closed the door and began the battle of stripping off my clothes and replacing them with the new ones. The first pair of jeans looked good, in my opinion, but I didn't like the way that the shirt fit... Or rather, didn't fit. I pulled it off and put it back on its hanger.

"Su-San?" I called, and I heard him get up and come to the door. "Could you go get me the same shirt, but a size smaller? This one is too big." I requested, and he took the hanger that I had flung over the top of the door. I watched his feet as he walked away, and pulled off the jeans, folding them and putting them on the little bench, deciding that that was going to be my 'buy' pile. I grabbed the next pair, and slid them on. I thought that they would be too tight at first, judging by the fact that they were a size smaller than the previous ones, but I was pleased to find that they fit perfectly. They hugged me just like I wanted them to, but they didn't dig into my hips.

I jumped as a shirt was dangled over the top of the door, then chuckled at how jumpy I was. I reached up and took it, pulling it over my head.

"Thanks Su-San! This one fits better! Oh! And it goes really well with these jeans!" I exclaimed, turning around to examine the back. I was very satisfied by how well the ensemble worked, and did a few spins. Then a thought dawned on me. "Oh, Su-San! Do you want to see! Mom usually demands to see, so I guess it slipped my mind without her to yell at me to come out." I called apologetically. I heard a small grunt, and took that as a yes. When I opened the door and came out, Su-San seemed shocked. I tried to think of why this would be surprising, and managed to remember that he wasn't used to the way I dressed now. I grinned playfully.

"What's the matter? Never seen skinny jeans before?" I asked, doing a little model prance for him.

"No' on ya." He replied quietly. I chuckled, halting.

"This is how I dress when I go to school. I can't wear your old jeans forever!" I claimed, going back into my dressing room. I pulled off the current outfit, then put it into the 'buy' pile before grabbing for the next pair of jeans. I pulled them on, but only got about half way before I decided that I didn't like them and ripped them off. I folded them back up and set them down, creating my 'don't buy' pile. The next few pairs ended up in the 'don't buy' pile as well, much to my dismay. I ran out of jeans pretty quickly this way, and went to the door.

"Su-San?" I called, and he came to the door obediently. "Could you go grab me some shorts to put on? Just whatever they have is fine. And anything else you think would look good. Just bring me whatever!" I instructed, and he went off to complete his mission. I went back to the shirts that I had yet to try on, and started pulling those over my head. I chose to keep most of them, excluding two that were a little too snug for my liking. I had about three left to try on,

when I heard footsteps approach, then saw the black shoes that Su-San had put on this morning.

“Ah didn' know wha' to ge', so I jus' grabbed one of pre'y much everythin'.” He explained. I chuckled, Pulling on another shirt. This one was long enough to cover my pantless lower half, which was a lucky break for me. “Can ya open the doo'? There's a lo'.” He said, and I blushed, wondering if I should pull on a pair of jeans. But, like I said, my nether regions were covered, so I opted to go ahead and take the clothes. It wasn't as if Su-San hadn't seen it anyway. Ten years of being best friends tends to take away any surprises that stripping could hold.

When I opened the door, I nearly gasped at the massive amount of clothes in front of me. I could barely see Su-San's blonde hair poking out at the top. I contemplated on how I was going to go about taking all of the clothes at once, decided that it was impossible, and grabbed about half of it, dropping it onto the floor and taking the rest.

“You weren't kidding when you said you got a lot! Thanks a bunch!” I smiled happily. He nodded, but it seemed a bit stiff. I would have questioned him about it, but he turned around quickly and sat back down. I shrugged internally, and closed the door. Su-San seemed a little... Off(?) Today. Maybe he really was getting tired of me... Would he tell me if he was feeling crowded? In all honesty, probably not. Well, when school started up, we wouldn't be able to hang out every day, so I guess he would get his break then.

I had pulled on outfit after outfit while I was thinking. I only really noticed what I had put on AFTER I had it on. Looking down to judge whether or not I liked the current pair of shorts that I had on, I saw my legs. A LOT of my legs. Had I put shorts on? I had to check to make sure. They were there, barely coming down to the top of my thighs. I gasped, blushing at my own reflection in the mirror. I had never put on booty-shorts before! I examined the back, giggling at how close to my butt they cut off. But even as I made fun of myself for looking like one of the girls that I hated, (You know the type. Boobs and butts hanging out, overly friendly, all over Su-San, etc.) I couldn't help but admit to myself that I did like them. A lot, actually... No, I would never wear these to school, but for around the house, it didn't seem like such a bad idea... Then again, this might be pushing it a little too much... I decided to get Su-San's opinion on the subject, and pulled on a tank top to cover my exposed chest. That accomplished, I opened the door and came out.

“Su-San? Should I get these? Just for around the house? They are soooooooo comfortable! Like, I can't even... Are you okay?” I asked, my concern overriding my need for answers. Su-San covered up his mouth like he was about to throw up, and his eyes were pretty wide. I bent down so that I could be level with his eyes while he sat. “Su-San? Hei! What's wrong?” I cried, to no avail. His eyes just got that much wider, and his face reddened. “A-Are you going to be sick?” I stuttered, stooping lower to look up into his face. He shook his head, and lowered his hands, taking what seemed like a deep breath.

“So'ry. Ah'm all righ'.” He finally said, but I wasn't convinced.

“Are you sure? You sure looked like something was wrong!” I proclaimed, and he gave me an apologetic look.

“So'ry. Ah... The foo' smell ma'e me sick.” He explained, and I sighed with relief. I too could smell the food, and I recalled that Su-San had trouble with Italian food. Sure enough, I could smell the garlicy food, and I smiled apologetically for not having taken that into account.

“Oh, okay! We can leave if you'd like! Just let me go change back into my clothes and pay for the ones that I'm going to buy! I'll be right back!” I said, turning around to head back into my dressing room. But I remembered why I had come out in the first place, and turned back around.

"Oh, right! Should I get these? I can't decide! I like them, but I just don't know!" I said, doing a quick three sixty for him. He just watched, paused, and nodded.

"I... If yer comfor'able in 'em." He said, seeming to refuse eye contact with me. I smiled none the less, and thanked him before closing myself back up and changing back into my original outfit, putting both the shirt and shorts into the 'buy' pile. After checking to make sure that I was completely in order, I gathered up the things I planned on buying, and stepped out.

"Okay! Good to go! But can you help me? I want to put up the extra clothes, so can you hold these?" I asked, smiling sheepishly. To my surprise, he shook his head. "N-No?" I asked, not used to being told that he wouldn't do something for me.

"Ya go an' pay for i' all, an' Ah'll pu' the res' away." He instructed, and I chuckled.

"Alright. That is a better plan. Meet me up there when you're done?" I asked, and he nodded in confirmation. I headed over to the counter, shoving my huge pile of clothes onto it, and the lady gave me a look, but started to ring them up anyway.

"School shopping, I take it?" She asked me, putting the clothes into a bag.

"Yep! How'd you guess?" I questioned, smiling in a friendly manner. She smiled back, finishing up with the clothes quickly, and pushed some of the buttons on her register.

"Not a lot of kids come in and buy this much clothes in one go unless it's for school. You aren't the first one!" She explained, then told me my total. I handed her the money, and smiled once more as she gave me the bag. I was rather pleased with how much I had gotten already, and I still had a lot of money left. I had obviously made a good choice on my first stop! I looked around to locate Su-San, and found him hanging the last of the clothes back up. I grinned as I joined him, and we headed back out into the mall. It was much busier than it had been when we came in, and I looked at a clock that was mounted on a wall. We had spent nearly an hour in that shop, much to my surprise.

"Oh! I'm so sorry Su-San! I didn't mean to take so long! You must have been so bored!" I cried, but he simply shook his head.

"We came 'ere to ge' ya clothes, Ah was expectin' this much." He assured. I smiled, thanking him quietly. We had started walking down the shop-lined halls again, and I looked to see if I wanted to go into any of them. I was a bit disappointed to see that the majority of these shops were not the type that held clothing. So far that first store had been the only one that actually had clothes I would wear. I was about to give up and suggest that we go home, when I finally stumbled upon the perfect store for feeding my emo tendencies!

Just from the outside I could see how black it was on the inside. The walls were lined with graphic t-shirts, depicting random games, bands, television shows, cartoons, etc. In the middle of the store was everything else, which included pants, accessories, and the rest of the things that made my brain think that I was in heaven. I pulled on Su-San's arm, urging him to follow me into the dark store. He refused to move, and I was therefore held back as well.

"Ya can' be serious." He inquired lowly. I looked at him questioningly, and continued to pull on his arm. I was going into this store, with or without him.

"Of course I am! Why shouldn't I be?" I asked, releasing his arm and huffing in anger at how little I had affected him by pulling. He looked into the store, then back at me.

"Tha'... Tha' store... Aren' ya scare'?" He asked, and I chuckled.

"Nope! I want to go in! Come on!" I plead, and he finally gave in, trailing after me as I went in. I grinned stupidly as I entered, already feeling like this was going to be one of my favorite stores in town. Again, I went back to the back of the store in search of the clearance rack. It had worked last time, hadn't it? I began to scan carefully, pulling out things I thought would fit me.

Some of the stuff was pretty intimidating, I must say. Even Su-San was shocked when I

pulled out a pair of jeans that was COVERED in chains. I almost added it to my armful of things to try on, just to scare him, but decided against it. He had already displayed his dislike for the store, and I wasn't going to push my luck. I found that there were MASSIVE amounts of shirts on clearance, and decided I would just grab one of each size to see which size I was in this store, then I would come back out and grab whatever shirts I liked. Satisfied with my selection, I asked the clerk for a dressing room. Though I was a bit scared of him at first, considering he had hair blacker than night, makeup, and piercings all over, but he smiled at me and unlocked it, wishing me luck with all of my clothes. He didn't seem quite as intimidating after that. I went in and immediately began pulling things on. I had already started my two piles.

Then I came across a pair of pants that I wasn't sure about. I liked how they felt while they were on, but they were rather tight when I looked at myself in the mirror. I debated over it, and decided that I needed a second opinion. I opened the door of the dressing room to talk to Su-San, but stopped dead in my tracks when I saw someone else approach him. I was consoled slightly when I realised that he was male, but not enough for me not to feel protective. I was really starting to sound like a jealous girlfriend...

The guy was tall, almost as tall as Su-San, but it was obvious that he was roughly the same age as us. His blonde hair was short and styled oddly, and he wore clothes that seemed like they belonged on a runway. Despite this, he came off as friendly, approaching Su-San with a big grin and clapping him on the shoulder. I could hear him, even from the doorway of the dressing room I was still standing in.

"Hey Berwald! I never thought I'd see you here! This doesn't seem like it would be your style!" He boomed, gesturing wildly. Su-San didn't seem affected by him in the least.

"I doesn' seem like yer style either." He pointed out, to which the guy laughed.

"It isn't. I'm here with Lukas. He's in that dressing room, right there!" He said, pointing to one of the rooms. "The one with his pants down!" He announced, and I flushed, embarrassed for the poor guy he was talking about.

"You know, I CAN hear you, Mathias!" I heard from the direction 'Mathias' had pointed. I assumed that that was Lukas.

"Oh, sorry babe! But you know how sexy you are! I just couldn't help but point it out!" He practically yelled. I groaned at how stupid this guy was, and was surprised to hear someone else do the same somewhere to my right. Perhaps that was Lukas as well?

Regardless, I deemed this Mathias person to be safe, as it seemed pretty obvious that he was in a relationship with whoever Lukas was. So I left the security of my dressing room, and approached them timidly. Su-San immediately turned his attention to me, and I smiled up at him. But, of course, the actions didn't go unnoticed by Mathias.

"Oh? And who is this little cutie?" He asked, causing my eyes to widen and my cheeks to flush. "Is this your boyfriend?" Well, at least he knew I was a boy... "Because if not, I might have to snatch him for myself!" I was gaping like a fish at this point, not sure what I was supposed to say. Luckily, 'Lukas' came out at that moment, and smacked the back of the taller male's head.

"I CAN hear you. Did you not catch that?" He said firmly, drawing my attention down to him. He was much shorter than Mathias, just a little taller than me, and his blonde hair was nearly as long as mine. He had a little white cross-shaped barrette. He seemed to be a pretty reserved person, as his face didn't hold much of an expression, though his agitation was rather obvious. The taller male rubbed the back of his head in pain, closing one eye.

"Jeeze Lukas! You know I was kidding! That hurt!" He complained, and the other rolled his eyes.

“Hello Berwald.” He said, turning away from the taller. He then turned his attention to me.

“And nice to meet you...” He trailed off, and I smiled shyly.

“I’m Tino.” I said, and took the hand that he offered to me.

“Well, Tino, sorry that you got harassed so early in the day, but he doesn’t mean anything by it. At least, he better not.” He assured me, turning to glare at Mathias.

“Um... I love you?” The taller blonde responded, more asking than confirming. This earned a sigh from the shorter.

“I know you do. Anyway, I’m Lukas, and this idiot is Mathias.” Lukas explained, pointing to the ‘idiot’ in question. I smiled, nodding at them both.

“It’s nice to meet you! Are you friends of Su-San’s?” I asked, directing my question at Lukas more than Mathias. I had already decided that I liked the shorter blonde better.

“Su-San?” He asked, raising an eyebrow slightly. I blushed, and looked down.

“Oh, um, sorry, that’s what I call him...” I said, pointing to Su-San.

“Oh, I see. Well, I suppose you could say that... We’ve all had some classes together. But Mathias considers himself to be everyone’s friend...”

“Because I am!” The taller exclaimed, making me jump.

“No, Mathias, you aren’t. In fact, for the most part, people can’t stand you.” Lukas spat harshly. I paled, wondering if I was witnessing a lover’s spat. I looked up at Su-San for guidance, but didn’t seem to be phased by any of it.

“Aw, come on babe, you love me! You know you do, or you wouldn’t be here!” Mathias pointed out. If someone said that to me, I would have gotten pretty mad, but Lukas seemed to keep his cool.

“And I ask myself, everyday, why. I have yet to arrive at an answer.” He said lowly. Mathias chuckled.

“Because I am absolutely irresistible! And not bad in bed, if all that scre...”

“If you say one more word, I will rip those lips from your face and force-feed them to you while I cook you slowly over a fire.”

Needless to say, the taller blonde shut up after that. I didn’t know whether I was meant to laugh or cry in terror, but Lukas didn’t give me a chance to even contemplate it fully.

“Well, I’m going to get these jeans. Come on Mathias. I’ll see you later Berwald, and it was a pleasure to meet you, Tino.” He concluded, pushing Mathias to the counter.

“Ah, yeah! It was nice meeting you too!” I called back. As they walked away, I tried to remember why I had come out in the first place. But before I could recall, Lukas had returned, and looked at me directly.

“Sorry. Before I leave, I just wanted to tell you that those jeans look really good on you. You should get them.” He said, then waved and joined Mathias at the entrance, taking his leave. Well, I remembered why I had come out, but now the question didn’t need to be asked, so I simply shrugged and went back into my dressing room. I continued on with my battle through the clothes, coming out randomly to get a second opinion from Su-San. We went to a few more stores after that, and by the time we were done, like I had promised, we could barely walk. Su-San had to help me carry my bags out to the car, and we both collapsed into the seats, exhausted from a full day of shopping.

Haha, Su-San seemed to enjoy the shorts, yes? Anyway, I had a little fun with shopping, as you can see. And I felt the need to get Den and Nor in there. This is my first time writing the two of them as well, so please tell me how I did with it! I'll try to improve if I failed utterly! I promise. They just seem like that couple that is always bickering playfully, so that's how I wrote them.

Mwahahahahahahaha [inserts lightning and evil music here] My friend gave me a wonderful idea, so look forward to something a little exciting coming up soon! I sure am! My friend is a genius!

Alright, that is all for now!

Here are the links!

Deviantart: <http://ask-nstac.deviantart.com/> (An ask profile, drawn answers)

Tumblr: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/ask-kuroriya> (An ask profile, written answers)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kuroriya>

Thank you for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

It gets a little steamy here at the beginning, but just for a second, I promise!

Berwald's Interlude

.....+.....

“A-Ah! Su-San! No! That's... That's...”

“Shhh”

“But! Ahhh... No! W-We can't! This is...”

Though he plead with me, I refused to stop. It wasn't as if he wasn't enjoying himself, after all. He's just a very vocal boy, that's all. And it was his own fault! Maybe if he hadn't been strutting around in those tiny little shorts, I wouldn't have been forced to jump him! I mean, what was he expecting? And to make matters worse, he spilled water all over himself!

Though I pride myself in having a massive amount of self-restraint, that was just a little too much for me. Unbreakable walls break.

So, that is how I found myself in my current situation, 'doing the deed' with Tino, and loving it. Sure, he's only been back in my life for a few days, but we've known each other for years! Surely that trumps the need to have dates and whatnot! Well, maybe not, but I couldn't stop myself, not this time.

“Uh... No... That isn't... Mom is...” He gasped, his face beet red.

“A' work.” I pointed out, shivering as he moaned loudly.

“Uuuun! But, I...” Tears started forming in his eyes, but I knew that they weren't the kind he normally cried. He was close, as was I, and I knew that this wasn't going to last too much longer.

“Fin, co'e on now...”

“S-Su-San! Ah! I-I... I'm Com...”

“BERWALD!”

I jumped, my eyes flying open.

“Berwald! Br'akfast is rea'y! Hurry up!” I heard my mother calling, and cursed in frustration. What did this make my count so far? About five. What was I counting? Wet dreams. Yes, I said five. How long has Tino been here? Five days. Yeah.

I got up, already uncomfortable. Thanks to my mother, I wasn't quite 'satisfied' by my dream Tino. After examining how bad my problem was, I sighed and accepted the fact that it was too noticeable for me to leave it alone. I was therefore faced with a decision. Cold shower, or deal with it directly, the old fashioned way? I ran my fingers through my hair in thought, or rather, TRIED to. My fingers caught in my tangled hair. That made my mind up for me, and I walked down the hallway to the bathroom. As I passed the stairs, I called down to my mother.

“Ah'm goin' to ta'e a shower! Pu' it in the micro'ave.” To which my mother answered with an “Okay!”

I turned on the water, not touching the knob for the hot. After stripping off my boxers, I braced myself for the chill that I was about to step into. Cold showers always sucked, but they were a pretty much daily part of my life here lately. Ever since Fin came back around. Try not to think ill of me. I've loved the boy since I was six. I may not have realised it until I hit puberty, but I know that it's true. Like I had said, I got around to thinking that me moving had been a good thing, even though the thought hurt. But now I can back up that claim, at least a little.

Tino changed with puberty, a lot more than I thought he would. The last time I had seen him, he was just a kid, trying to adjust to the growth spurt he had just hit. Now... Everything is new and exciting. His face lost the baby fat, leaving a slim but round structure. His eyelashes grew, framing his violet eyes beautifully and casting shadows on his feminine cheekbones. His lips were fuller, though they made the same smile that they always had. And that was just his face.

Unlike most boys, his shoulders didn't broaden too much, nor did his chest get very much bigger. But, let me tell you, the lower half definitely filled out, quite nicely. His hips got wider, and they created a perfect form, leading down to a wonderfully supple butt. Tino always complained about his inability to lose weight, but he needs to understand that he is the PERFECT size. If he were any skinnier, his figure wouldn't be very flattering. It's because of the way that he curves that he is so damn attractive!

And it is exactly this mentality that lead me to my current situation of hissing as the cold water hit my shoulders. I shivered involuntarily, but knew that it was already doing what it was supposed to. I went about my normal shower routine, though it was completed much quicker, seeing as the cold water was rather uncomfortable. After getting out, I tried to go about my day as normally as possible. I got dressed, ate breakfast, saw my mother off, did dishes, all of the things that I had been doing for years.

Then I heard a knock on the door, and I knew that my day was about to get a lot brighter. There was only one person I knew that would completely bypass the doorbell and knock. None other than Fin. And, as I predicted, I heard the door open, and saw a blonde head poke into the kitchen.

“Su-San?” He called, glancing around, then smiling when he found me, my hands still in the soapy water. “Ah! Hei! Good morning!” He exclaimed, causing me to glance at the clock. I rose an eyebrow, and turned my attention back to him.

“I's two in the af'ernoon. Did ya jus' ge' up?” I asked, and he rubbed the back of his head awkwardly as he walked into the kitchen, laughing nervously.

“Um, maybe?” He asked more than answered, but I wasn't truly paying attention to what he was saying. No, my mind was too busy trying to convince my body not to react the way that it was wanting to. As my terrible (amazing) luck would have it, he had elected to wear the very booty shorts that had been the trigger of my dream last night. I swallowed hard, trying to think of anything BUT my dream, not very successfully. I should have told him not to get them, and I had known that from the second he walked out in them. But I was much too distracted by all of the possibilities, not to mention the fighting I had to do with myself not to jump him right there in the mall. I almost lost that battle when he bent over to check on me, right in front of a mirror, of course.

I guess that it's a good thing that he remembered I dislike Italian food, as that served as my excuse. But I'm REALLY fortunate that Tino is incredibly naïve, or my cover would have been blown a long time ago. If he wasn't so innocent, he would have realised that I always

flushed whenever he did anything that could be considered sensual. And he really thought that I turned around when he changed. I felt a little bad as I watched him slip out of his clothes, his back turned to me, as was polite. But I loved the view way too much to look away.

“I was up late last night, trying to hook up the computer. I mean, it isn't that hard to do, but my mom wouldn't leave me alone, and insisted that I was doing it wrong, which I was not!” He explained, drawing my attention back up to his face. I tried my best to smile for him, and he returned it happily. “Anyway, mom left earlier, and didn't make me any breakfast! She left me this note instead!” He scowled, waiting for me to dry my hands off, and handing me a small piece of paper. I read it, and a smile formed slowly as I did.

Dear Tino,

Good afternoon. Knowing you, it is probably about 1:30. I refuse to make breakfast for a person that doesn't get up in the morning. Sorry about your luck. You're going to go to Berwald's house anyway, and we both know that he'll make you something if you ask. I'm gonna guess that, since it is incredibly hot outside, you are going to want to wear those shorts that you bought yesterday. I washed them, and they are sitting on top of the washing machine. I suggest that you wear that blue shirt, the tank top with the penguins on it? You know the one I'm talking about. And before you call to ask for it, look in your dresser. You probably threw it in with your Pjs. The milk is in the back, behind the eggs and tea. We don't have any strawberry syrup, so you'll have to deal with chocolate. You left your blue converse in the living room, next to the tv. Hope Berwald feeds you, and have a nice day. Love you.

Mom.

I looked up at him, and, sure enough, he was wearing the shirt that she had mentioned. He was pouting, and I knew she had been spot on, as usual. I flipped the paper over, wondering if there was anything else written. And, not too surprisingly, there was.

Hello Berwald!

I figured Tino would show this to you, so I wrote a note to you too! He wasn't smart enough to find this, was he? I'd say that it's probably around two now, and he's wearing exactly what I told him to, isn't he? Well, anyway, please feed him, as he's probably pretty hungry, and tell him that pouting like that will give him premature wrinkles. He'll probably scowl when you tell him, get angry, and snatch this note.

Hello Tino, I assume that you are now reading this, in a very angry manner. Mommy loves you, and promises that she'll get you some more strawberry syrup!

Anyway, thank you Berwald, for everything! You don't have to make him anything special. Just give him some cereal and call it good. Tino, it isn't polite to growl.

Hope you two have a good day!

Laila

“Yer ma says tha' poutin' like tha'll give ya prema'ure wrinkles.” I said, and had to keep myself from laughing as he scowled and grabbed the note. Reading it over, I waited, and, sure enough, he growled.

“How does she do that?! Can your mom do that?” He asked, pointing at the note frantically. I

shook my head, grabbing a skillet and pulling out eggs.

"Yer ma knows ya really well." I informed him, and he sighed, sitting down at the bar. "Ya wan' an omelet, righ'?" I asked, and he jumped up, glaring and pointing at me as if accusing me of committing witchcraft.

"You just did it too!" He exclaimed, and I raised an eyebrow. "How did you know what I wanted?" He asked, and I actually had to think about it. After failing at coming up with an answer, I simply shrugged.

"Today seeme' like a' omelet day?" I tried, and his eyes narrowed.

"...Are you psychic Su-San?" He inquired, refusing to break eye contact.

"...Ah've been disco'ered." I said seriously. "Ah ha'e ta kill ya now..." His eyes widened, and it seemed like he believed me, but then his brows furrowed in confusion. After a moment of thought he burst out laughing.

"Oh my god... I... I thought you were serious for a second there!" He cried between peals of laughter, and I couldn't help but smile as well.

"Am Ah that goo' of an ac'or?" I asked, and he nodded.

"Yes! Like, I was about to run away! I thought you were about to attack me with that spatula!" He confided, sitting back down in his seat, still chuckling. I lifted the edge of the omelet to see how much longer it would need to cook, then went into the fridge to grab ham and cheese to put inside.

"So, what's up with you today? Are you going somewhere?" He asked me, poking the fruit that was in a bowl on the bar. I shook my head.

"No' unless ya wan' ta go somewhere." I replied, folding the finished omelet in half and transferring it to a plate. I sat it in front of him, and he grinned at me.

"Thanks Su-San! And I don't know... We've been out pretty much since I got here... Maybe we could just hang out here? Would that be okay?" He asked me, looking up as he put the fork in his mouth to retrieve the bite he had cut off. I nodded, agreeing with the suggestion.

"Awesome! We should make it a party! Like, music and junk food and... Sorry, I'm not made to think clearly in the morning... What should we do? We could watch movies, or play a..."

He was cut off when the phone rang, much to his displeasure. Fin always hated getting interrupted. But I reminded him that pouting caused premature wrinkles, and he chuckled, so I assumed that it was now safe for me to turn my attention to the phone.

"H'llo?" I said into the receiver, and waited for a response on the other end. I didn't wait long.

"Hey! Berwald! Morning!" I winced at the loud voice, and even Tino jumped. I was sure he could hear everything that would be said.

"Ma'his? 'ow did ya ge' my number?" I asked, narrowing my eyes in suspicion at the phone.

"Ah, it was in the school registry. But no need to sweat the small stuff, big guy!" He replied, and I had to force myself not to point out that he was nearly as tall as I was.

"Wha' do ya wan'?" I questioned, already tired of speaking to the obnoxious guy.

"Ouch.... No need to be so harsh!" He said, feigning a hurt voice. I sighed in frustration, wanting nothing more than to strangle him. But it seemed that someone else beat me to the task, or at least injured him in some way, as he cried out loudly, making my ears ring.

"Shit! What was that for?" He demanded from the other person. Though it was faint, I could hear Lukas in the background.

"You are asking him for a favor, so quit being an ass! This is why everyone else said no! This is our last shot, now be polite!" He snapped, and it caused me to raise an eyebrow in confusion. He was going to ask me for favor? This already sounded bad...

"I'm not being... Whatever! Okay, Berwald, I have a HUGE favor to ask you." Mathias said, sounding serious for once in his life. Tino had gotten up and came over, trying to hear the

conversation.

“See, Lukas and I have been living together, because our parents don't approve of our relationship and all that jazz. But I just lost my job a few days ago, right before rent was due, and... Well, I think you can figure out what happened. So we're, like, sitting at a hotel right now, but we don't have the money for another night...” He explained, and the color was slowly draining from my face. Please don't ask if you can...

“So, um... Could we come stay at your place, just for a little while? Please?” He inquired, and I groaned. Of COURSE he would ask that. I racked my brain for any way that this could be avoided.

“Ma'his, I live with my ma.” I pointed out.

“I-I know, but I just... I don't really know what else to do... We just need a couch, or even the floor! Please? If you say no, we're gonna have to sleep outside tonight... Can't you at least ask your mom? Please?” He said, quietly. Even I was having issues dealing with this. The Mathias that I was used to seeing at school was always so loud and obnoxious, in a constant state of happiness. But, right now, he sounded so pathetic, so desperate. How was I supposed to say no?

I opened my mouth to tell him that I would talk to my mom, but I heard a snuffle, and turned to Fin in surprise. And of course, he was crying like a little baby. I gave him a concerned look, and he wiped at his eyes, trying to rid them of tears.

“S-Su-San! W-We have to h-help them!” He stuttered, trying to regain his composure. “They can't sleep o-outside! Please Su-San?” He said, looking up at me pathetically. I groaned internally, and I knew that this battle had been lost. “I-I can take one of them! Then it won't be as hard to get your mom to say yes! Please?” He tried, and I finally relented. We both knew that his mother would be more than willing to take one of the boys in.

“Fine.” I said, informing all of those involved that I had accepted it. There was silence, but only for a moment while the word was processed.

“R-Really?” Mathias asked, sounding very stunned. I sighed, rubbing my face in frustration.

“es.” I confirmed quietly, and I heard both he and Lukas breathe a sigh of relief.

“Oh, god, thank you so much! We owe you big time! Where do you live? We'll grab a bus over there!” He rushed, probably trying to get here before I could change my mind. I told him my address, listen to several thank yous, then he assured me that they were on their way, and hung up. As soon as he was off the phone, I went to get some pill to stave off the already forming headache. Fin followed me, though he was unusually silent.

“Fin? Are ya ok'y?” I asked, pulling the bottle out from the cabinet in the bathroom. He shuffled awkwardly, and nodded.

“Um... Yeah, I just... I'm sorry...” He said quietly. I swallowed the pills dry, then moved out of the bathroom.

“For wha'?” He followed me out, and back down the stairs.

“I... I know you don't like that guy, Mathias... I just, I couldn't leave them like that...” He admitted, looking very remorseful. I sighed, sitting down on the couch and gesturing for him to do the same.

“It's all righ'. I was goin' ta say 'es anyway.” I assured, and he looked at me with wide eyes.

“Really?” He asked, and I nodded.

“Ya just ma'e i' easier to explai' to ma.” I informed, and I finally got a smile at that.

“Oh, thank goodness! I...I was really worried that I... Thank goodness!” He exclaimed, throwing his arms around me the best he could while we sat on the couch. I was a bit startled, but I returned it gently. I always wondered if it was strange for me to hug him like this... Who am I kidding? Of course it is! But we have always been pretty touchy-feely, even when we

were younger. I guess we never grew out of that habit...

“So, um, which one is going to stay with me?” He asked me, forcing me to release him, to my displeasure. I didn't even hesitate in answering that question.

“Lu'as.” I stated, leaving no room for argument. He seemed surprised.

“H-huh? But you don't like Mathias, do you? Wouldn't you rather Lukas stay with you?” He asked me.

“I don' trus' Ma'his 'round ya.” I explained. He just furrowed his brow in confusion.

“Don't trust him? Why not?” He questioned. I groaned at how innocent he was, and that was apparently enough to convince him to drop the subject.

“Um... So... I guess we are having a party after all!” He said, offering me a grin.

Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

I have to say, life seemed so surreal after Mathias made that call. We went about our normal routine, as if the call hadn't happened at all, as if we were pretending that two boys weren't about to come live with us. We also hadn't yet addressed the topic of how exactly we were going to explain this one to our mothers. This wasn't some kind of 'pet' that we had found. These were two human, teenage boys. And yet, we simply sat on the couch, playing the Xbox as if nothing was amiss.

That is, until the doorbell rang. We both jumped up, abandoning our characters in the middle of the game, and rushed to answer the door. Needless to say, we found two very bedraggled boys on the other side. Mathias was grinning, and Lukas just looked exhausted. It was pretty obvious from their rumpled clothes and messy hair that they HAD been staying in a hotel. But they seemed fine just yesterday! How did they take such a turn for the worse?

"Um, hey Berwald! And, um..." Mathias started, cutting off when he realised that he had forgotten my name. Lukas sighed in frustration.

"Tino. Maybe you should try to remember the name of the one who convinced Berwald to let us stay." He snapped harshly. I could tell just by the way he was speaking that he was tired, and probably hadn't slept too well the night before. I tried to smile, and I think I succeeded in lightening the atmosphere a little.

"Oh, that's alright! He just met me after all! But you guys look really tired... Like, you look completely different than yesterday!" I blurted, and regretted it the second I did. That was such a stupid thing to say! Luckily they didn't seem too offended.

"Yes, well, yesterday we were trying to look like normal teenagers. If someone catches us looking like this, and sends us home to our parents, we're going to get separated. We ran away last year, and luckily our parents didn't pursue us. But they won't let us go again."

Lukas explained, running fingers through his ruffled hair. I nearly cried when I heard that.

"T-They really hate your relationship that much?" I asked quietly, and he nodded. "That's so awful! They should support you in everything you do, not just in what suits them! That isn't fair to you!" I exclaimed, and he and Mathias both sighed.

"We can't control the decisions that our parents make. But we definitely aren't letting it stop us, so don't worry about it too much. Anyway, we both really appreciate what you two are doing for us. We are literally living on twenty dollars, so this is keeping us off the street."

Lukas said, effectively switching the topic of conversation, and succeeding in puzzling me.

"Bu-But then... Why were you two shopping yesterday?" I asked, earning another sigh.

"Someone broke into our hotel room and stole all of our clothes. All we have is what we were wearing, and what we bought yesterday." He explained, bringing my attention to the lack of any suitcases. The only 'luggage' that they had with them was a backpack that was slung over Mathias' shoulder. I really did start crying at that point. Everyone's eyes got a bit wider when I did, but Su-San reacted quickly, pulling me into a hug.

"I-is he okay?" Mathias asked, probably not sure what exactly he had done wrong.

"Oh, I am so sorry! Y-you guys are the ones that need comforting, not me! But so many awful things have happened to you two and... And I just... Just... I can't even imagine..." I whimpered, then wiped frantically at my eyes, trying to rid them of tears. I needed to stop

being such a baby! Especially in front of people who were going to be living with me!

“I-I'm sorry! I'm okay now! I think...” I announced, trying my best to smile. “So, um, you guys know the plan?” I asked and Mathias shook his head.

“All we know is that one of us is staying here, and one of us is staying with you.” He said, and I nodded.

“Okay, well, I live right next door. And I guess Lukas is staying with me.” I explained, and a look of relief washed over the both of them. I tilted my head in confusion, wondering why they had been worried.

“Oh, well we just... We thought that we were going to be separated, so it's a relief to know that you live so nearby.” Lukas explained, and I smiled sheepishly.

“Yeah! It works out well!” I confirmed, smiling. I then worried about falling into an awkward silence, but luckily for us, Mathias was there to save the day.

“Soooo, um, we haven't exactly had a decent shower in a while, so could we, you know...” He trailed off, and Lukas elbowed him sharply in the stomach. “OW! Why the hell did I get hit this time?” He demanded, holding his stomach tenderly.

“Because they really didn't need to know all of that!” Lukas spat. I scratched the back of my head sheepishly, wondering if this was going to be a common occurrence from now on, or if Lukas was just really irritable today. I was hoping it was the latter, because I didn't think that my brain could keep up with this couple otherwise.

“Th' bathroo' is upstairs.” Su-San announced, shocking everyone. I realised that that had been the first thing that he had said since the boys arrived, and gave him a small smile of apology.

“Th' towels are un'er the sink.” He continued. They nodded, and began heading up the stairs.

“Thank you, both of you.” Lukas said before turning.

“Oh! Lukas?” I called, having remembered something. He turned back to me. “Um, you look about the same size as me, so if you want to borrow some of my clothes I can bring them over for you.” I offered, and he finally gave me a smile.

“Yes, that would be great. Thank you so much Tino.” He said, and I couldn't help but grin back.

“Sure. I'll have them here before you get out.” I assured, and he nodded, heading back up the stairs. After he disappeared, I turned to Su-San, who was looking, truth be told, a little overwhelmed.

“How you holding up?” I asked, smiling up at him. He was quiet for a moment.

“A lit'le bi' too much prolon'ed exposure to Ma'his.” He admitted, and I chuckled.

“He just got here!” I said, causing his face to fall slightly.

“Ah know...” He replied quietly. I giggled, then turned towards the door.

“Better get used to it, seeing as he's going to be living with you for a while!” I called, pulling on my shoes. He groaned loudly, and I chuckled. “I'll be right back! I'm going to go grab Lukas some clothes!” I informed him, quickly making my way out the door and into my house. When I had made my way up to my room, I pondered what exactly I should bring him. Our styles were similar, at least when I dressed for school, but I didn't know what he wanted for comfort. After some careful contemplation, I decided I would play it safe, and grabbed an old pair of jeans (Of the not-skinny variety) and a simple t-shirt. If he had objections, he could come over with me and pick his own after he got out. Satisfied with my choices, I nearly ran back down the stairs, before I realised that I had another decision to make.

Lukas would probably require underwear too... I flushed at the thought. And what was I to bring him? Boxers? Briefs? I had both, but which would he prefer? This was a very tough question indeed. Though the default choice would be boxers, I had a hard time imagining that

he could get away with wearing skinny jeans in them. So did I go with briefs? Would he even want my underwear? It must be weird to wear another guy's underwear...

I finally had to tell myself to stop overthinking it, and grabbed a pair of briefs before heading back to Su-San's house. I bypassed the door and walked in, smiling at Su-San who was on the couch.

"Hei! I'm back!" I announced sheepishly, already heading up the stairs.

"O'viously." He returned, and I chuckled. When I got to the top of the stairs and turned the corner to get to the bathroom, I was surprised to find a set of clothes already there. I smiled when I realised that they were Su-San's. I guess that proves that he doesn't hate Mathias as much as he lets on. I put Lukas' on top, then made my way back down the stairs and joined Su-San on the couch. Neither of us spoke for a while, but I finally couldn't take the silence anymore, and asked the question I'm sure both of us wanted an answer to.

"So, um, what now?" And he simply shrugged.

"Ah'm not real'y sure." He admitted. I chuckled lightly, not sure what to make of the current situation.

"Do we... Entertain them? How would we do that in the first place? Nothing like this has ever happened to me before..." I confided, and he nodded.

"Ah know... We coul' play the Xbox? Or wa'ch a movie?" He suggested, and I nodded.

"That sounds okay... But let's wait until they get out so they can choose."

That decided, we simply sat there, both of us trying to think of things that we could do if they decided that either of those activities was not up to par. We weren't left to wait for very long, as they both came downstairs, looking very much refreshed. Lukas had put on my clothes, and I breathed a sigh of relief that he didn't seem to be repulsed by them.

"Hey, you two are awfully quiet! Oh, and thanks for the clothes!" Mathias boomed, and I saw Lukas rub his temple in agitation.

"I apologize about his utterly annoying existence. I am very ashamed to even KNOW him, let alone date him, but somehow fate twisted my heart into falling in love with his dumb ass. So please, for my sake, forgive him. It isn't his fault that he jumped out of shopping carts as a child. Oh, wait, it is." Lukas said, sighing dramatically for effect. Mathias groaned loudly, shoving Lukas so that he stumbled down the last two steps.

"Come on! I did that once! And I thought we talked about sharing my personal stories with other people!" He whined, making Lukas smirk.

"Yes, and I thought we talked about using an indoor voice as well, but it seems you chose to ignore that little conversation, so I figured I had the same right." Lukas retorted, smacking him in the head for pushing him down the stairs. "And, just so you know, you put the life of our unborn child in danger by trying to push me down those stairs. Emil won't be pleased with that at all when I tell him." To this I raised an eyebrow. Surely he was kidding! ...I hoped...

"No! Please don't tell Emil? I'm sorry for trying to push you down the stairs babe! Come on, Our unborn child is alright, so no harm done! Come on!" Mathias cried, rubbing Lukas' stomach delicately. Lukas seemed to contemplate this, then everyone in the room gasped as he fell to the floor abruptly.

"Lukas? Holy shit, are you okay babe?" Mathias nearly screamed. Lukas sat up, cradling his stomach tenderly, then he turned and glared at the taller.

"No I am not okay! I just had a miscarriage! I hope that you're proud of yourself! You killed our baby! You murdered little Dimitri! He didn't even get to meet his own daddies, because one of them was dumb enough to accidentally kill him before he could even take his first breath! Was drowning little Gerard not enough for you? Baby murderer!" Lukas wailed,

glaring hatefully at his boyfriend. I stared, not sure exactly what the hell had just transpired. I tore my eyes away just long enough to glance at Su-San who, to my surprise, looked just as dumbfounded as I did. I turned back to the couple in front of us, as if they would offer me some kind of explanation. For a moment, all was silent, then, finally, to my utter relief, Mathias cracked up laughing.

“Oh, God babe! I love you so much! But poor Berwald and Tino must be soooooo confused right now!” He gasped, trying to be coherent through all of his laughter. Even Lukas was grinning.

“Yes, sorry. We do this kind of thing a lot, I'm afraid... I suppose I've taken too many acting classes for my own good...” Lukas explained, accepting the hand that Mathias offered him, using it to stand up.

I had to process this new information, blinking a few times, before it finally registered in my mind exactly what had just happened. Then I started laughing too.

“Oh my god! I thought that you guys were being completely serious! I was trying to decide if I was going to call an ambulance or if I was going to run around in circles like a chicken with it's head cut off! And I wanted to ask who Emil was, but couldn't find an appropriate time to do it!” I proclaimed, wiping at my eyes. This earned me a chuckle from Lukas, and an extra loud laugh from Mathias. “I couldn't figure out how two guys were supposed to have a baby! I just... Oh wow... That was the best thing I've seen in ages!” I decided, calming down enough to stop laughing.

“Yes, like I said, we do this pretty frequently. So if it sounds like bullshit, it probably is. And Emil is my younger brother.” Lukas explained, dragging Mathias over by the sleeve of his shirt. I nodded, and scooted over to allow them room to sit down. It wasn't intentional or anything, but I WAS closer to Su-San now... They sat down, and both looked at the blank tv. This cause my memory to jog, and I jumped up.

“Right! I nearly forgot! Su-San and I are boring people, so we have no activities planned for the night! Therefore, after careful consideration, we have come up with two options for you to choose from! A: We play the Xbox, oooooooooor B: We watch a movie. Yes, we are lame, uncreative hosts, but we worked hard to construct these options for you! Choose wisely!” I announced loudly, grinning at them. They both gave me a smile, for which I was glad.

“Four boys on an Xbox sounds a little dangerous...” Lukas pointed out, and I nodded in agreement.

“A movie it is then! You two should come pick one, because I'll pick something utterly lame, and I don't want to bore you too much!” I said, gesturing to the movie rack. They complied, standing up and making their way over to it.

“Okay while you do that, I shall go make popcorn! No movie-fest is complete without it!” I proclaimed, making my way to the kitchen. I didn't have to search for the popcorn at all, seeing as it was always kept in the cabinet right above the stove. Sure enough, when I opened it, my prize was sitting exactly where I guessed it would be. Pleased with myself, I pulled the box out and removed two bags of popcorn, and threw the first one in. I watched as the bag grew, slowly at first, then rapidly, and listened to the popping sound until the timer went off, and I pulled it out. I put the second one in, then started hunting for big bowls. I found them in the island cabinet, and pulled two of them out, pouring the first bag in. The timer went off for the second bag, and I retrieved it, pouring it into the second bowl. Satisfied with my accomplishment, I picked both bowls up and headed for the living room.

I nearly dropped the bowls when I entered. To my surprise, Mathias was sitting ON TOP of Lukas, who was flailing pathetically. Mathias was shoving a dvd into the player, and Su-San looked like he was debating whether or not to help Lukas, or if he should stay put.

“Get off of me! You're heavy!” Lukas commanded, but Mathias remained as he was.

“Nope. Not until the movie starts.” The taller retorted, pinning Lukas' arms so that he couldn't hit him.

“Mathias! Get off! Now!” Lukas demanded once again, but Mathias still did not budge.

“No!” He said, crossing his arms stubbornly.

“MATHIAS!” Lukas shouted loudly, scaring everyone in the room, including the man who was being yelled at. Everyone froze, then Mathias obediently got off of his boyfriend.

“U-Um, I'm sorry babe... I just really wanted to... It's such a funny movie, and...” Mathias tried, but was cut off.

“That's no reason to sit on me! You weigh too much to be sitting on me! I don't like it when you do stuff like that! You know that!” Lukas snapped harshly, getting up and moving to the couch. I looked at Mathias, who was looking quite a bit like a kicked puppy. There was something different about this fight... It didn't seem as good humored as the others that they had had up until this point. Lukas seemed truly angry this time. Mathias got up as well, and came to the couch. But he didn't sit on it, he instead sat on the floor right in front of his angry blonde lover, and laid his head in his lap.

“Babe, please, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you, you know that! I was just messing around. I forgot, and I'm sorry.” He whimpered pathetically, and I wondered what exactly it was he had forgotten. And was Lukas hurt? He hadn't cried out at all... I looked to the smaller blonde, and watched as the anger evaporated from his face, and he sighed loudly.

“How long have we been dating? And you forgot? You're so lucky that I can't seem to stop loving you.” He said quietly, running his hands through the taller blonde's hair affectionately. Mathias looked up and grinned, getting up and joining him on the couch.

“I know.” He confirmed. I stood in the doorway for a moment, trying to catch my brain up to the current situation. Luckily for me, Su-San decided to come and check on me at that moment. Granted, he didn't get very far when he found me in the doorway.

“Fin... Are ya o'ay?” He asked me, and I snapped my attention from the couple, now cuddling on the couch, to the one I wished I could do the same with.

“Oh, y-yes. Just a little overwhelmed... They're kind of a bipolar couple... I left for like, five minutes, and they went from looking at movies, to Mathias sitting on Lukas, then they were fighting, and now they're cuddling? I'm having trouble keeping up...” I admitted, and I earned myself a small twitch of the lips. (I hope you all know that this is equivalent to a Su-San smile... If not, I might cry... More...)

“Ah know. Bu' they aren' as bad when ya separa'e them.” He assured me, and I breathed a sigh of relief.

“That's good to hear. Um, what exactly started the fight?” I asked, and he rolled his eyes.

“Ma'his wan's to wa'ch Blades o' Glory, bu' Lukas doesn'. He said tha' once was enough for him.” He explained, taking one of the bowls from my hand. I nodded, and followed him out to the living room. Despite everything, Lukas hadn't removed the movie, and I couldn't stifle the laugh that came when I saw two very unattractive in VERY tight skating outfits. This was sure to be fun...

Sorry for the delay, but my laptop is dead at the moment, and all I have is the old family computer. I'll forgo links this time!

Thanks for reading, and comments are appreciated!

KuroRiya
九六りや

Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Su-San handed the bowl that he had taken from me to Mathias, who took it with a grin.

“Thanks! Can't watch movies without popcorn!” He reiterated, giving me a wink. “Right?”

He prompted, and I grinned back.

“Right!” I confirmed, sitting on the far end of the couch. Su-San plopped down next to me, grabbing the remote and pushing play. Some pretty music started playing, and a little boy was skating on a frozen lake. Figuring I had a moment before the actual plot started, I looked away to carefully place the bowl of popcorn in my lap in between the two of us, then took a piece. Truth be told, I'm not horribly fond of popcorn, but it is a long practised tradition to have some with a movie, so I bear with the bitter flavor of it.

Finally, the men in tight outfits started to appear, and I was already laughing at how ridiculous they looked, and their “skating” moves just made it that much worse. Mathias was laughing hard enough to make up for Su-San's lack of laughter, and even Lukas had allowed himself a small smile. Despite having not wanted to watch it, as the minutes passed, Lukas seemed to warm up to it more and more, finally allowing a chuckle to escape when a guy proclaimed his desire to “Cut off your skin and wear it to my birthday party... It's coming up...” Seems like Mathias is good at picking group movies.

Looking over, I noticed that even Su-San was having a little trouble keeping a straight face, and that made me grin even bigger, digging my hand back into the bowl to grab my next bite of popcorn. To my surprise, what my fingers found in the bowl was NOT popcorn. In fact, it felt suspiciously like human skin... But why would there be...

Looking down, I made a very unmanly, undignified sound as I realised that my hand had collided with Su-San's, since we had both attempted to get our handful at the same time. I blushed, pulling my hand away as quickly as I could.

“S-Sorry! I wasn't paying attention! Go ahead!” I stuttered quietly, not wanting to bother Mathias and Lukas. He stared at me for a moment before taking his and bringing his attention back to the movie. I tried to do the same, but found that the movie had lost my interest. My mind was more preoccupied with what could have happened, had my balls ever managed to drop.

If I was a braver person than I am, I could have taken that hand, even if just for a moment, and given it a quick, loving squeeze before letting go, leaving the moment sweet and chaste. However, I knew better. Su-San wouldn't appreciate the gesture, and might actually be repulsed by it. I sighed, glancing at Lukas and Mathias enviously. How had they gotten together? Was it as difficult for one of them as it is for me right now? Did they ever NOT love each other? Would they help me were I to ask? How would they react to finding out how I felt about Su-San? So many questions, but none of them could be answered. I shook my head, tricking my mind into believing that the physical movement could really clear it of thought. I focused my eyes back on the movie, and laughed as the fatter of the men ran from a treadmill to get himself a piece of chicken, proceeding to shove it into his mouth as he got back on the machine. The smaller, blonde man tried to call for his coach, and got the fatter man's fingers pointed at him threateningly. I shook my head, not sure what to think of the film.

I went to grab my next handful, and yelped again when I felt a hand meet mine yet again. I drew back, smiling sheepishly.

“Sorry! I think we're too much in sync with each other! We even grab food at the same time.”

I whispered, and I earned a twitch of the lips.

“S'ems so.” He agreed, taking his bite and leaving me to get mine as well. I didn't think I would last too much longer if this kept p through the whole movie...

..-.-.-.-+.-.-.-.-.

Finally the movie ended, and my heart was given time to rest. Despite my hopes, our hands brushed several more times, and I squeaked each time it happened, even when I told myself that I wouldn't. Luckily, the movie had been funny enough to distract me from the small touches, and my heart hadn't burst just yet. As the credits rolled, I looked around the living room that all four of us were occupying.

Mathias was still laughing from the ending, and Lukas seemed to be a little drowsy, sending up the red flag for me that it was, indeed, getting late. Su-San was just... Su-San. There is no other word to describe him. And I was flushed, as usual.

Because of the little yawn that Lukas tried to stifle, I brought my eyes to the clock that was perched on the wall opposite us. I gulped as I read eight thirty five in my mind. That meant that my mother was home, which meant it was time to attempt an explanation of Lukas. How did I plan to do this? I was supposed to have a plan? Hmm...

I took the bowls that had already been discarded by the other males in the room and took them to the kitchen, dumping the leftover kernels into the garbage can then running water into them. No, this wasn't truly a necessary process, Su-San would do it later if I didn't, but I needed the time to think.

What would my mother say? What could she say? I knew, without a tiny bit out of doubt, that she was going to be pissed. It was the level of anger that I had to contemplate. Surely I would get a few points for helping someone out? And Su-San had sent the quieter of the two boys with me, so that was a plus too. And, though he might just have a dislike for popcorn, it didn't seem like Lukas ate too much. Hopefully that was enough to limit my grounding to only this year... But, knowing my mom, it would probably spill into next.

I sighed, Pulling the bowls out of the water and setting them in the rack to dry. It was now or never, I decided, making my way back into the living room. I smiled at Lukas when he glanced at me groggily as I walked in.

“Ready to go?” I asked him, and he nodded, standing from the couch. I nodded, turning to Su-San who was still seated on the couch. He got up when he heard me mention leaving, and dutifully gave me my routine hug. I smiled at him, wishing him a nice night, though I knew that it wouldn't be. Mathias pouted as we passed by him, and I quirked an eyebrow in confusion.

“No goodbye kiss?” He asked, and I nearly fainted before I realised that he was addressing Lukas, not me. Silently thanking the stars, I chuckled as Lukas rolled his eyes and gave him a soft peck on the cheek. Mathias seemed disappointed, but seemed to think better of complaining. Lukas smiled at this, and gave him a real kiss, which seemed to light Mathias' face up faster than a flame could. I smiled, a little bitterly, at the loving scene before me, wishing that two different people were experiencing it. Namely Su-San and I. I sighed, knowing better than to dream, and simply tried to be happy for my new friends. Lukas seemed happy enough when he turned around to follow me out, so I was reassured that these two truly loved each other. That was always a nice thing to see.

Lukas followed me to the door and pulled his shoes on. I grinned when I saw that he, too, owned a pair of converse. I pulled my own on, then held the door for him. We made quick work of the walk to my house, and I opened the door, allowing him in. I gulped when I saw my mother's heels on the shoe rack. This was the jumping off point. She had no idea what was about to happen, but I knew she wouldn't like it one bit.

"Tino? Are you back?" I heard her call, and I took a deep breath.

"Yeah, mom, it's me. I'll be there in just a sec." I called back, then turned to Lukas.

"Um, could you wait here for a sec?" I asked, blushing. He nodded in understanding, and I smiled apologetically. "Thanks, I'll be right back." I assured, going into the kitchen. My mom was cooking something in the microwave, and I approached nervously.

"H-Hei mom..." I started, and she turned, her eyebrow quirked.

"What did you do?" She asked me, causing my eyes to widen and my mouth to gape. "You only ever stutter when you've done something that is going to make me angry. So what did you do?"

I faltered, shuffling my feet sheepishly. I took a deep breath, trying to calm my nerves, then tried my best to make this sound good. It was going to have to if I wanted to live to see tomorrow.

"W-Well, I... Um... Okay, a friend of mine, Lukas, and his boyfriend have been living together, because their parents don't approve of them and all that stuff. But Mathias lost his job a few days ago, and so they couldn't pay for their apartment anymore, and... Oh! Mathias is his boyfriend! And um, they were living in a hotel, but they ran out of money, and they called Su-San to see if they could stay there for a little while, but I kind of said that we could take one of them, because I didn't think Su-San's mom would want two boys staying with her, so, um, Lukas is here, and I... I..." I babbled, then flinched when she moved, expecting to be slapped, or punched, or something. But she simply ran her hand through her hair.

"He's here?" She asked, and I nodded. She sighed, then motioned for me to lead her to him. I left the kitchen, hesitantly, and she followed me. Lukas was still waiting by the door, and I gave him a nervous look before stopping, waiting for my mother's reaction. She looked him up and down, and he did the same to her.

"Lukas, I take it?" She said quietly, and he nodded.

"Yes. It's a pleasure to meet you." He said, holding his hand out. She shook it, then gave him a small smile. "Well, at least he brought home someone with manners. I'm Tino's mom. Please, call me Laila. I'm sorry to hear about all that's happened to you. You, and your boyfriend, are both very strong for your age. You're welcome to stay here as long as you like." She said, and I breathed a huge sigh of relief.

"Thank you mom! I was so worried!" I cried, smiling at her. She turned on me quickly, and I gasped in surprise, not expecting such a quick movement.

"I'm still mad at you! The only reason you aren't in trouble is because you're doing a good deed!" She snapped, and I gulped, nodding. Lukas gave a small smile at that.

"Thank you, very much. I truly appreciate this." He said to my mom, and she smiled at him.

"You're welcome. Anyone with such good manners is welcome in my house! Tino could learn a thing or two from you!" She confided, and I flushed.

"My manners are perfectly fine, thank you! Maybe I'd be nicer to you if you didn't make fun of me so much!" I retaliated, and she shook her head.

"Mhm, sure. Now, where is he sleeping?" She asked, and my mouth fell open.

"Oh... I... Um... I didn't think of that..." I admitted, and she groaned.

"I should have guessed as much! Honestly!" She cried in exasperation, turning back to Lukas. "I hate to say it, but our couch isn't very comfortable to sleep on, and it can get pretty

loud down here in the morning. Would you be okay with sleeping in Tino's room? I can make you a little bed on the floor, with a bunch of blankets and pillows?" She tried, and Lukas smiled.

"That sounds fine, thank you." He assured, and she smiled back, running to get things ready. I watched her go, then turned back to Lukas.

"Well, she likes you, which is a good thing. Oh! You can come in, don't just stand there!" I exclaimed, gesturing for him to follow me. He obliged, stepping into the living room and glancing around.

"This is the living room, obviously. Over there is the kitchen." I said, pointing in the general direction. I then started walking up the stairs, and he followed me obediently. "That's my mom's room. That's the bathroom. That's the hallway closet, though I doubt you'll ever need to know that." I explained, pointing as we walked down the hallway, finally arriving at my already familiar room.

"This is your room, I take it?" He asked, and I nodded.

"How'd you guess?" I inquired, grinning. He smiled back.

"It's the only one left." He deadpanned, and I chuckled.

"Yes, yes it is. This is my room, welcome." I announced, pushing my door open. My mother was inside, layering blankets on the floor, but she glanced up when the door opened.

"Ah, nice timing Tino. Go get him some pillows." She commanded, making me frown.

"Alright... I'll be right back Lukas." I said, running to the aforementioned hall closet, and stood up as tall as I could, reaching for the pillows that were on the very top shelf. I grunted with the effort, but smirked to myself when I felt fabric against my fingers. I tugged, causing them to cascade down on me. This was how this kind of thing worked for those of us who are only of average-shortish height. If you wanted something off the top shelf, you were fated to be attacked by it. You get used to it after a while.

I picked all of the pillows up, then headed back into my room. Lukas was helping my mom lay the blankets down, and I couldn't help but grin at how well they got along. They both looked up when I entered. I smiled sheepishly, holding my hands out.

"I have retrieved pillows, as commanded!" I barked, then chuckled. "I hope this is enough..."

"Yes, that's plenty, thank you." Lukas assured, getting up to take them from me. My mother stood, and stretched while yawning.

"Well, I think the surprise of acquiring another teenage boy has exhausted me, so I'm going to go eat the hotpocket that is now sitting in the microwave, likely cold, then go to bed. You guys all set?" She asked, and we nodded. "Alright then, goodnight boys. Sleep well. Don't forget you have school tomorrow!" she said firmly, then looked at Lukas, worry evident in her expression.

"Um, do you go to the same school as Tino?" She asked, and he nodded, to her obvious relief.

"Yes. No need to worry." He assured, And she grinned.

"Alright, that's a relief! You boys go to sleep, okay? Goodnight, see tomorrow after school. Rakastan sinua, Tino. Hyvää yötä." She called, and I smiled at the ever familiar words.

"Kyllä, Hyvää yötä, Minäkin rakastan sinua." I called back, and I listened as she went down the stairs. When I turned back to Lukas, he seemed curious.

"Are you Finnish, by any chance?" He asked, and my eyes widened.

"Yes, but I'm surprised you knew that!" I exclaimed, and he chuckled.

"I'm Norwegian, so I suppose that I have an ear for Nordic languages. I know a little Danish, thanks to Mathias, and my aunt married a Swede, so I've picked a little of that up. My younger brother is half Icelandic, and was raised there, so I've learned quite a bit of that. I

don't really know any Finnish, but I could tell that you were speaking in a Scandinavian language, and I figured that, since I didn't recognize anything you just said, it was probably Finnish.” He explained, and I had to concentrate hard on his words to process all of the information he had just given me.

“So... Mathias is Danish?” I asked, and he nodded.

“Through and through.” He confirmed. I nodded, then moved onto my next question.

“And, Emil is your little brother, right?” Another nod. “And he's half Icelandic?” Again, a nod. “So, doesn't that mean that you are too?” I asked, confused. This time he shook his head.

“No, Emil and I have different fathers. Mine was Norwegian, his was Icelandic. His father divorced my mother about a year after she had Emil, and took him back to Iceland with him. He only just recently came back to live with my mother and I.” He explained, and I nodded.

“Okay, I think I get it.” I said slowly. “But why did he come back just recently?” I asked, and Lukas frowned. My eyes widened. “O-Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't mean to pry! You don't have to tell me if you don't want to!” I cried, hoping I didn't seem too nosy.

“No, it's alright. His father died two years ago, so he was sent to live with us. But he says he doesn't mind. His father was a rather nasty man, so living here has been a good thing for him. But he doesn't like my mother's husband. Granted, neither do I.” He replied, and I teared up at the thought.

“I-I'm sorry... Um, why don't you like him?” I inquired, trying to keep the conversation flowing.

“He's a stuck-up, homophobic asshole.” He stated simply. I tilted my head to the side in confusion. Lukas sighed, sitting down on his little mound of blankets, gesturing for me to do the same.

“I've been with Mathias since middle school, and my mother was fine with it. But when she told Seth, that's her husband, he was furious. He stormed up to my room at two in the morning, my mom following behind like a panicked animal, and literally RIPPED me from my bed, demanding an explanation for what he had just been told. I told him that I loved Mathias, and I had been dating him for years, and he threw me down on the floor, screaming about the “fucking faggot” living in HIS house that my mother bought. Emil woke up, and he came to see why everyone was being so loud. He started crying, and came to sit on the floor with me. I don't think he was really sure what was going on, he was just scared. So Seth cornered us, both me and Emil, and started ranting about how disgusting it is to be a faggot, and why he wasn't going to put up with it. I tried to explain to him that love doesn't acknowledge gender, and that it wasn't something I could change. That really pissed him off, and he picked me up by my collar and slapped me hard enough to send my head reeling. He dropped me back on the floor, screaming about what a disgrace I was, and how I didn't even deserve the air I was breathing, and the whole time Emil was bawling, and hugging me, and he just kept yelling. Eventually he got pissed at Emil, and screamed at him to shut up. But that just scared Emil more, so he started crying harder, and he got slapped too, then I got angry and yelled at Seth for slapping Emil, and then I got punched for that, and finally my mom decided to step in, coaxing him downstairs. But that was all I could take, and I ran away later that week, with Mathias.”

I couldn't help myself, I started bawling, making Lukas smile softly. I rubbed my eyes furiously, to no avail. I shook my head, trying to apologize for how pathetic I am.

“I-I'm sorry! I... Well, you can probably tell I'm a big baby! But, I just never... You seem so normal! I never would have guessed that something like that happened to you!” I said wearily.

“Am I supposed to act differently?” He asked me, and I shrugged.

"I-I don't know... But, um, what happened to Emil?" I asked, and he grimaced.

"Well... He still lives with my mother. I couldn't really take him with me, I can barely support myself. But he comes and visits me a lot, and he says he's doing fine. Seth acts like a pretty normal, if not angry, guy, as long as I'm not brought up. So he's playing his cards carefully until he can get a job and move in with Mathias and I." He admitted quietly, and I frowned.

"But he's okay?" I pushed, and he nodded.

"Yes, he's fine, thankfully. I check him every time I see him, looking for any cuts or bruises, but he never has any. If I ever find any, I'm calling child services." He assured, and I sighed in relief.

"Alright. Sorry, I was just worried about him."

"That's alright. It's good of you to worry about someone else's sibling. Anyway, let's move on to a happier topic, shall we?"

I nodded, looking around for anything that could be a happy conversation topic, but found nothing. I bit my lip, racking my brain for ideas, when I happened to look at my shirt. Right, pajamas!

"Oh! Do you want to put on some pjs? It's getting pretty late..." I pointed out, and he nodded.

"Yes, that sounds good." He replied, and I jumped to open my dresser. I pulled out a pair of pants and a tank top for myself, then gestured to the still open drawer.

"Um, I don't really know what you like, so you can come choose something, if you like..." I trailed off. He nodded and got up, venturing over to the drawer and glancing at the contents. After some contemplating, he pulled out a pair of pants and a loose t-shirt. I smiled, closing the drawer.

"Alright, um... you can go to the bathroom if you're uncomfortable changing around me..." I offered, not really sure how to handle someone other than Su-San.

"That's okay. I'll change in here, if you don't mind. I'm sure you don't have anything I haven't seen, nor the other way around." He pointed out, and I nodded with a flush.

"R-Right. Just wanted to make sure you knew the option was there... I'm not really used to having anyone over at my house... My only friend is Su-San, so I don't really have any other experience..." I explained sheepishly, turning my back to give him some privacy.

"Really? You seem the type to be very social..." He called. I chuckled, switching my jeans for the sleeping pants.

"I tend to attract bad things. Like, if there is a slight elevation on the road, I trip over it. If there is a group of people, chances are they plan to beat me up. No one seems to like me for some reason..." I admitted, then turned around, having finished changing. Lukas pulled the shirt down over his stomach, then turned to look at me.

"That's hard to believe. I liked you the moment I met you, and so did Mathias. You're VERY likeable." He announced, and I blushed.

"Ah, thank you. I've never really heard that before..."

"Hmm... Well, Berwald isn't going to be your only friend anymore. You've got Mathias and I as well." He stated, and I smiled warmly at him.

"Thank you, Lukas." I nearly whispered. He nodded, then suddenly smirked, sitting back down on his blankets.

"Though, honestly, I don't think you want to be friends with Berwald." He said, and I blanched.

"W-What? But he's been my best friend since kindergarten! Why wouldn't I want to..."

"That's not what I meant." He interrupted. "You want to be MORE than friends." He corrected, and I flushed bright red.

"Wha-What are you talking about? Su-San and I are just... Just friends!" I tried to sound

tough, to no avail. He chuckled.

“Please. You're pretty obvious, Tino. I think even Mathias noticed.” He informed me, and I groaned.

“Seriously? I've been trying so hard not to show it! I didn't want to make Su-San uncomfortable! Do you think he knows it? OH, jeeze, what am I going to do?” I started to moan, but Lukas shook his head.

“No, I don't think he knows.” He said, and my eyes snapped open. “He's a rather dense guy, I must say. I don't think he's caught on to you. But may I suggest that you tell him?” I sighed, not really sure how to explain it to him.

“I... I can't. I... I don't want to lose the only person who has ever had such a huge impact on my life. We've been friends for so long, I doubt he'd understand even if I did tell him. I love you has become too commonplace in our lives for it to really mean anything. I just... I don't know how to explain it to him. And what if he says no?! I mean, I couldn't blame him! I'm not a great sight to see, nor do I really have a personality to speak off... I don't have anything to offer him, and I'm so scared of getting rejected, and...”

“Tino.” He cut in, and I jumped. “You're over-thinking this too much. Yes, it's a huge risk to take, but wouldn't you rather try, and be rejected, than to keep it inside, and never know? And don't give me any of that 'I'm ugly' crap. Tino, I know it's hard to think so, when in your shoes, but you really are very attractive. If you could tear those pretty violet eyes away from Berwald, you might notice how many people are looking at you. And even Berwald watches you! Your problem is that you lack self confidence, and you panic too easily. Just go with the flow, see where it takes you. You might be surprised.” Lukas scolded, and I flushed further.

“I... I um... Thank you? I-I guess I can at least try...” I complied, not really committing to it. He sighed.

“You aren't going to do it, are you?” He asked, and I scratched the back of my head awkwardly.

“I'm sorry, I'm just... Scared...” I replied quietly. “How... How did you and Mathias get together?” I asked, and he groaned.

“Ugh, such a stupid story!” But he still told me anyway.

“I've known Mathias for as long as you've known Berwald. He just decided that he wanted to be my friend, and I couldn't get him to leave me alone to save my life. Eventually I got used to it. We've always been a pretty touchy pair. Like, all of the other guys started keeping their hands to themselves, but Mathias and I still hugged, and sat on laps, and gave piggyback rides, and cuddled on the couch or in bed when having sleepovers, you know, the stuff you did as a kid, but are supposed to stop doing when you become a “man”. And I guess it just progressed one day... We were laying in his bed trying to go to sleep. The heat was out, so we were closer than usual trying to stay warm, and... Well, this is a young teenage Mathias, you can probably guess.” He trailed off at the end, and I blushed, nodding. He gave me a small smile. “Rest assured, he didn't take me that night, but he got pretty close. But I told him I wanted to date first, and he agreed. But he needed a shower after that.” We both chuckled.

“And we've been together ever since. I know I seem mean, but I really do love the idiot.” He finished. I smiled, liking the little love story. Then, a question came to my mind, and my cheeks reddened with a new vigor. Was I really going to ask? Yes, yes I was.

“Um... Have you guys.. um...” I tried, failing to get the word out. Luckily he knew what I was getting at.

“Yes, we have.” He confirmed, and I blushed even harder.

“O-Oh. Okay.” I stuttered, trying to shut my mouth before I said something stupid. There was so much more that I wanted to ask, but I wasn't sure if he would be comfortable answering

the questions I had.

"It's alright Tino, you can ask me. Or I guess I can just answer them now. Yes, it hurt the first time, like a bitch. But it gets a lot better if you can ignore it for a little while. There's a spot inside of you that will make you feel amazing, you just have to endure it until he can hit it. Sex does change the relationship, a lot, but it was a positive change for us. It brought us a lot closer, and it helps to explain the feelings that we can't describe with words. And if he asks to try out something new, try to be open to it. You never know, you might like it." He droned, and my eyes widened, my flush only burning hotter with each answer.

"N-New things?" I managed to squeak out, and he gave me a knowing smile.

"Yes, new things. To be frank, I was not the least bit pleased when he pulled out the handcuffs. But it turns out that I have a fetish for them, so..." I made a very unmasculine noise at that, hiding my face in my hands. This caused him to chuckle. "Ah, it seems crazy to you now, but believe me, sex is more fun when you throw some toys in there. I didn't like the idea at all, at first. In fact, in my rules and regulations about our relationship, I specifically pointed out that I would not become his little sex slave, and that all forms of restraint were strictly off limits. But now I have trouble climaxing without something extra." He admitted, and I just sunk further into my hands. "Alright, alright, I'll stop talking about it, so you can stop hiding. I didn't mean to make you uncomfortable, I just wanted to give you some advice." He cooed, and succeeded in coaxing me out of my hands.

"N-No, it's better to know a little than be completely surprised when it happens." I said, trying to be brave and calm my raging blush. "But really? You like handcuffs?" I asked, and he smirked.

"Yes, quite a bit, actually. Mathias always tells me I'm too feisty, and I can't help but resist when he's trying to have sex with me. The handcuffs prevent me from doing that, so I am forced to submit, which is new to me, and that really gets to me. I know it must sound weird, but I don't know how else to explain it." He tried, and I nodded.

"I think I understand. But wow... You guys are so... I don't know, couple-y! I wish I had someone who loved me enough to... Well..." I sighed, trailing off. Lukas smiled, a mix between knowing and friendliness.

"You do Tino, you just don't know it." He said, then stretched out on his blankets, laying on his back. "Just give it some thought Tino. I think telling him how you feel would be the best thing to do." I smiled, trying to humor him. I got up, switching the light out, then crawled into my bed, careful not to step on Lukas.

"I... I'll try... Someday..." I said, deciding that it was a promise. I heard a soft chuckle.

"Alright. I'll hold you to that." He replied, and I heard him roll over in his makeshift bed.

"Goodnight, Tino." He said lowly.

"Goodnight Lukas. Sleep well." I returned, then in my head; "Goodnight Su-San. I love you." I heard him shuffle once more, and smiled to myself. Despite how surprised I was at a lot of the things I had learned that night, I was happy to have met Lukas. I finally had someone who was in a similar situation as I was, and it was comforting to hear about his successes. I had someone who I could ask the questions that I couldn't ask Su-San, and I had someone who knew exactly what it felt like to be irrevocably in love with someone, even if that love was crazy, unaccepted, illogical, and flat out stupid. I had someone who understood. I had a new Friend.

Double update, per usual!

Thanks for reading, and comments are the best things in the world!

Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

I groaned in annoyance as my alarm blared, waking me up at six o'clock sharp. Surely it had to be slightly illegal to make people get up this early? Even if it was just a little bit, if I had any hopes of a fighting chance, someone was getting their ass sued off...

I reached out blindly, trying to find the snooze button to silence the deafening sound.

Unfortunately, I managed to move in my sleep, so when I thought I was scooting over a little, I was scooting off the edge. I registered that I was falling, and braced myself to hit the hard floor, but to my surprise, my landing was pretty soft, if a little bony... Wait... did my floor just make an "oof"? I looked around in confusion, freaked out a bit by my now living floor, my alarm clock still screaming.

"Tino, despite liking you a lot, I prefer NOT to be crushed first thing in the morning. Believe me, Mathias will tell you how many times he's had a black eye from it..." I cried out in surprise, scrambling off onto the actual floor, and looked at Lukas apologetically.

"Oh my god! I am so so sorry Lukas! I really can't think in the morning, and I forgot you were here, and I was trying to turn off my alarm, and I'm so sorry, and..." I spewed, trying to make everything alright again, but he cut me off.

"Okay, Tino, I get it! It's alright! Just calm down and turn the alarm off." He snapped, and I jumped to complete the task. Once the room was once again silent, I seemed to calm down, and turned to Lukas again, smiling sheepishly.

"Hei, sorry, I kind of panicked..." I admitted, and he raised a brow at me.

"I would say so. Are you always like this in the morning?" He asked, and I nodded as a dull flush dusted my cheeks, then tried to flatten my hair with my fingers.

"Yeah. And my hair always looks this bad when I get up too. It is still to be discovered exactly how the tornado messes it up every night without waking anyone up, but it does..." I explained, and he offered a small smile, standing up.

"It isn't too bad. Just a little..."

"All over the place?" I suggested, and he nodded.

"Yes, that's the word... Anyway, time to get ready for school." He said, and I nodded in agreement, getting up to go to my closet. I pulled out a t-shirt, then went to my dresser for a pair of jeans. I never wore shorts to school, ever; Too many things could go horribly wrong. After finding a pair and retrieving underwear, I turned to get dressed, only to realise that I had forgotten about Lukas. He was standing where I had left him, looking slightly lost.

"Oh, Lukas, sorry, you can borrow anything you can find! I don't know your size, but if it fits, you can wear it!" I announced, and he smiled gratefully, walking to the closet and looking for a shirt to put on.

"I promise I'll accumulate my own wardrobe, just as soon as Mathias or I can get a job." He assured firmly, but I just shrugged, pulling on my shirt.

"It's alright, I don't mind sharing. I've got enough clothes for three or four kids in here, might as well spread the love. But I understand wanting to have your own clothes. Anyway, I'm going to go down and make pop-tarts. Do you want some? S'more flavor?" I asked, already halfway out the door.

"Yes, please." He called as I shut the door to give him some privacy. Well, he definitely

added some spice to my morning routine, to say the least.

I opened the small pantry door, in search of the promised pop-tarts. After some searching, I found them on the third shelf down. As I went to grab them, I noticed the piece of paper, and groaned when I realised that I had just received another letter from my mother.

Good Morning Tino!

I hope that it is currently 6:10, or you are running behind. I bet you fell on top of Lukas this morning, didn't you? Forgot he was there? If you can honestly answer yes, mommy is really proud of her big boy! But I doubt that you can, so I won't get excited. Hopefully, you remembered to ask Lukas if he wanted some breakfast? You better have! Anyway, Berwald's mother said that he had already offered to take all four of you to school, so don't worry about the bus. I bought strawberry syrup yesterday, it's in the door. Have a good day honey, and good luck. Send Lukas my regards!

Love you, Mom

I sighed, tossing it into the trash as I passed. Really, how had she gotten to know me so well? It wasn't fair that she could always tell what I was thinking! Lukas interrupted my thoughts, joining me in the kitchen. He had borrowed a tanktop and a pair of jeans, and I wanted to frown, knowing that he had intentionally chosen the least attractive of my clothes. Then I realised something; yes, my mother could practically read my thoughts, but she accepted them! Lukas' mother couldn't even do that! Here he was, almost having to resort to sleeping out on the street, and forced to borrow someone else's clothes, all because his love for Mathias was unacceptable. I guess I should be more grateful for my mother...

"Hei, sorry, I got distracted. How do you like your pop-tarts?" I asked, and he raised an eyebrow in intrigue.

"Isn't there only one way to cook a pop-tart?" He inquired, but I shook my head.

"No! Most people just eat them out of the toaster, but I like to put mine in the microwave! It makes it softer! But not a lot of people like it that way... Actually, I've never met anyone else who eats it that way..." I admitted, and he smiled.

"I guess I could give it a try." He said, and I lit up, grinning as I stuck them into the radioactive box also known as the microwave. I watched the timer countdown excruciatingly slow from thirty, then pulled it open immediately when it hit one. This got me another confused look.

"I hate the awful beep it makes when it goes off! It's so obnoxious!" I explained, handing him his pop-tarts on the plate, and taking mine into my hand. It was hot, yes, but not bad enough that I couldn't do it. He seemed to contemplate this new information, then smirked.

"As obnoxious as Mathias?" He questioned, and I shook my head without having to think at all.

"I don't think I've ever seen anything as obnoxious as that guy..." I admitted, and he shook his head right back, as if disagreeing.

"Wait until you meet Gilbert. No... Obnoxious isn't a strong enough word to describe him..." He muttered, and my eyes widened.

"It isn't? What is?" I demanded, and he simply shrugged.

"I don't think there is a word... Or even a collection of several words... You'll just have to meet him." He decided, and I chose to drop the subject for the moment. I suppose I would just have to trust him on this one.

We both ate our pop-tarts in record time, and I looked at the clock to find that we still had half an hour before we even had to leave. (If we were to drive to school at twenty miles per hour, that is....) That decided, we grabbed our belongings and headed over to Su-San's house, in hopes that the two taller boys had already woken up. I knocked on the door, and we waited as patiently as possible, hoping we wouldn't have to sit on the porch for the next thirty minutes. Thankfully, I heard footsteps, and the door was opened pretty quickly. There was Su-San, looking like he hadn't slept at all, his clothes appearing to have been pulled on and off several times, due to how many wrinkles there were. I tried to smile, but I think it must have looked pretty pained.

"U-Um, hei Su-San! How was your...Night?" I asked, and he allowed himself a small groan. My smile became even more pained at the thought. "That bad?" I inquired, and received a small nod. This time Lukas sighed, drawing the attention of the both of us to him.

"I'm sorry about him... I tried to tell him not to do anything stupid, but this is Mathias... His entire existence is stupid..." He pointed out, and we both nodded.

"NORGE? IS THAT YOU?" Speak of the devil... We all groaned a little at that, even me, proving that Mathias was the only true morning person out of the four of us.

"Who else would it be you loud mouthed mess of flaming morning person bile." Lukas bit out, and I squeaked in surprise at how harsh the statement was. That definitely would have hurt my feelings were it directed at me... Alas, this is Mathias we speak of, and he took it in stride.

"Oh Norge, I missed you so much last night! Even the mean words you always say to me! Say something nasty again!" The tall teen requested.

"There is something horribly wrong with you if you truly missed being called names by me! Granted, I should have expected as much from a person with a head so empty that he circled the X in the question that read "find X". He snapped, unintentionally filling the request.

"Hey! How was I supposed to know that I was supposed to do a super complicated equation!?" Mathias demanded, and got a glare from his boyfriend.

"It was an algebra class! Not a good enough example of your stupidity? How about when you stared at the orange juice carton for twenty minutes because it said "concentrate"?" The smaller spat out harshly. Mathias winced visibly.

"Again, how was I supposed to know that it wasn't THAT kind of concentrate?" He asked, and Lukas threw his hands in the air dramatically.

"It's common sense you dumbass!" He practically shouted. Mathias frowned. "Or how about having to come ask me where the "anykey" key was on the keyboard, because the message said "Press any key to continue."?" He continued, and Mathias groaned.

"Okay, okay, babe, I get it! Jeeze!" He cried, turning to Su-San. "Is he ever this mean to you?" He asked, pointing a finger at me, and Su-San immediately shook his head.

"Hey, you told me to say nasty things, so I did. Hopefully I put a damper on that disgustingly peppy morning attitude of yours." Lukas reminded him, and Mathias pouted.

"That was a little overboard, babe, even for you." Mathias informed the smaller, who sighed in agitation.

"Fine. I'm sorry? You're still stupid, but I'm sorry. Feel better?" Lukas asked, giving in. This caused Mathias to smile, and he pulled his boyfriend into his arms, pressing a kiss first to his lips, then again to his temple as he pulled away.

"Yes, I do! Now come on, let's go in the house! Don't want Berwald's neighbors thinking that we're a group of rowdy teenagers!" He decided, pulling Lukas in behind him as he walked into the house.

"The only problem with that is the fact that you are the ONLY rowdy one out of all of us. In

fact, you're rowdy enough for four or five people. I'm just glad that you and Gilbert don't hang out with each other." Lukas groaned, though allowed himself to be led into the house. I smiled at Su-San, and followed the other two in, Su-San close behind me, closed the door. Mathias had already claimed the larger of the two couches, and had obviously pulled Lukas down with him, as the smaller was now glaring at him while he sat in his lap. I couldn't help but grin when I saw the two of them together. They were definitely a strange couple, but they somehow made it work, which was enough, in my book.

I think Su-San and I both subconsciously decided that the two could use some "alone time", so we opted to go into the kitchen. Once inside, he sighed yet again, and I patted the bar-stool next to me as I claimed my own.

"Tell me all about it?" I asked, and he shook his head. My eyes widened at having been told no.

"No' unless ya ma'e a deal with me." He announced, and I grinned.

"Oh? And what is this deal of which you speak?" I asked, and he held his arms out.

"Ah wan' a hug firs'." He stated simply, and I chuckled, getting up and practically flinging myself into his arms. I felt the flush come yet again, but tried to ignore it, and relish in the fact that I had been prompted for a hug. THAT IS A VERY RARE OCCURANCE!

"That doesn't seem like much of a trade on your part! You can have a hug anytime you want!" I reminded him, and his lips twitched.

"Well, Ah rea'y needed it taday." He admitted, and I looked up, meeting his gaze.

"Why's that? Oh., is this the telling part? We should totally sit down so I can play therapist!"

I cried, and he complied, sitting on the bar-stool next to mine. "Alright, what's up?" I asked, and he gave me another twitch of the lips.

"Ah had ta spen' a whole nigh' with Ma'his." He said, leaving it at that. I raised an eyebrow.

"That's all? I don't get anymore details?" I inquired, and he scratched the back of his head.

"Do ya nee' anymore details?" He asked, and that one made me chuckle.

"I suppose I get the gist of it... But something specific would be nice..." I tried, and he sighed yet again.

"Alrigh'... He wouldn' shu' up, wouldn' le' me go ta sleep, Had ta pee thirteen times before he ac'ually DID go ta bed..." He listed, and I scoffed.

"Thirteen times? Surely you're exag..."

"Ah counted." He cut me off. I simply looked into the room that I knew Mathias was in, not sure what to make of thirteen trips to the bathroom. I decided not to dwell on it too much though.

"Okei, well, what did you two talk about?" I asked, trying to forget thoughts of the bathroom. He groaned loudly at this, rubbing at the bridge of his nose.

"Ya don' wan'ta know." He assured me, but I wasn't convinced.

"But I do!" I insisted, and he rubbed harder.

"It... Mos'ly 'bout Lukas, and you, and how "big" he is, how he compares ta me, sex, handcuffs... Ge' the picture?" He tried to stop, and my mouth was too preoccupied with trying not to squeak like a girl with each word spoken. I had to be as red as the shirt Mathias had elected to wear today. How red is that, you ask? Ever seen blood on a firetruck red tomato. Yeah, that red.

"O-Oh, okei..." I managed to mumble, then buried my face in my arms in a bid to hide the blush. He patted my shoulder in understanding, then I heard him get up an open the fridge.

"Well, 'ow was 'ur nigh'? He asked, and I looked up in time to see him plop my pre-made lunch down in front of me. I smiled in appreciation, then shrugged.

"About the same, actually. Minus the bathroom trips and the... Comparisons..." I replied,

trailing off at the end. He nodded his head, and pulled out his lunch as well. "Actually, I probably kept HIM awake... but he told me about his family too, and about how he and Mathias got together, and all that kind of stuff." I finished, realising that our nights had actually been very different indeed. Su-San just nodded again.

"Seems like ya two are getting' along pre'y well." He pointed out, and I smiled, nodding.

"Yeah, we are. I like Lukas a lot. He's really cool to have as a friend." I confirmed. Su-San seemed to understand, and came to sit by me again. "Anyway, sorry that you didn't sleep very well... Maybe school will wear him out for tonight?" I offered, and he growled, making me jump.

"Ah don' even wan'ta think o' tonigh'!" He spat, and I couldn't help but chuckle.

"Alright, fair enough. Are you excited for school then?" I asked, and got another throaty noise.

"Wha's ta be 'cited 'bout?" He questioned, but continued before I could even open my mouth.

"The only goo' thing 'bout it is seein' ya, bu' I can do tha' at home." He explained, and I offered him a smile of encouragement.

"I suppose so, but might as well face it with a grin!" I exclaimed, and he shook his head.

"Hey! Shouldn't we start heading out? Or are we going to be fashionably late? I'm always fashionable, but late would be a pretty new one!" We both heard Mathias call, and we could also hear Lukas groan in frustration in time with our own groans.

"Unfortunately, you self absorbed wad of tasteless clothing choices, it is the other way around. You are late, but hardly ever fashionable." Lukas shot, and I could almost see Mathias cringe at the insult.

"Jeeze babe! You're really mean today! Did being apart from me for an entire night make you grouchy?" He asked, and I imagined Lukas rolling his eyes.

"Don't you wish. No, I quite enjoyed my night with Tino, it was actually quiet for once. And you know what's even better? I could actually breath in his room, as I didn't have to fight the void in your head for the empty air." He countered, and I gasped. That one was really hateful... I think that this was taking it a little too far, and a little too harsh, even for Mathias.

"...Babe? Are you mad at me for something?" I heard him ask, though he had lowered his voice to converse with Lukas.

"No, not particularly. Maybe the break from manic idiocy was a little too nice, but I haven't found anything specific to be angry with you over, just yet." Lukas replied, and I started walking toward the entrance of the kitchen, which would lead me into the living room where the two were currently discussing.

"Then why are you saying such harsh things?" Mathias questioned, and I heard Lukas sigh.

"I... I don't know. I'm sorry... I guess I must not be able to go so many hours without insulting you... It's all coming out now, it seems..." He admitted, and I opened the door in time to see Mathias wrap his arms around the smaller's frame and press a kiss to his temple.

"Awww, that was, like, saying "I missed you whole big bunches" coming out of you!" He cried, and I managed to decipher a groan from the mouth of the muffled Norwegian.

"Whatever." Lukas mumbled, then they both stood, noticing that Su-San and I had entered. We were all quiet for a moment, then I decided I wanted to break the silence.

"Um, everyone ready to go?" I asked, and got nods from everyone. I nodded as well, and pulled the strap of my bag over my shoulder, then led the way out to the car.

After a brief fight over who would sit where (At first Mathias insisted that he wanted to sit in the passenger seat, which I wanted. I eventually gave in, and got in the back with Lukas, then Mathias realised that his boyfriend was in the back and demanded that I trade with him so he could sit next to his beloved Norge. He got the back of his head smacked when he settled in

next to Lukas.) we were off, on our way to school. This would be my first day in the new building, surrounded by new people, and new standards, but at least, this time around, I had Su-San to help me fight through it all.

Chapter End Notes

Norge was MEAN this chapter! I mean, seriously, MEAN! He says the things I think out loud... But as I type this, I realise that each character has begun to reflect me in one way or another... Tino is the biggest one in the resemblance department, but Norge is a smartass like me, Berwald is the quiet, awkward part of me, and Mathias is the obnoxious sugar high that I get on occasion. I'm growing to love them bit by bit, even though I feel like a slave as I write this story...

It has come to my attention that the first note I wrote shows up for every chapter... So links every chapter are not necessary! That saves me some trouble!

Thanks for reading, and feedback is the greatest!

KuroRiya
九六りや

Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

As we pulled into the driveway of my new school, I couldn't help but marvel at the sheer size of it. Just looking at it, it was clear to me that it was at least three times the size of my old school. I wondered why there would ever be a need for a school this large, but quickly remembered that this was a larger town than my previous one, so it would make sense that there would be more teenagers. Still, this was...

Su-San parked his car expertly, and I was curious as to why exactly he hadn't had to search for a spot. To further my confusion, this spot was pretty close to the entrance of the school... Wouldn't people fight over this spot? Then how on earth had he gotten it? The cars that had been in front of us had just sped past, not even considering the spot... I furrowed my brows. Perhaps the spot was cursed, and only Su-San had the guts to park here? No, that was a ridiculous notion... But what...

"We buy 'ur spo's 'fore school, so Ah'm the only one 'ho can park 'ere." He explained, much to my relief, and I smiled appreciatively.

"Oh, I see! That's actually really smart... The kids back home always raced to get better spots... This gets rid of that, I guess." I mumbled, and he nodded.

"Firs' come firs' serve." He stated simply, and I chuckled, undoing my seat belt and getting out of the car. I turned to find Lukas and Mathias had gotten out as well. They had been surprisingly quiet the entire ride to school, and it was becoming a bit eerie... Though Lukas was pretty quiet on his own, from what I had seen of him with Mathias, they were a very loud couple. So the silence of the ride was a bit awkward. Not even Mathias had said a word, which I was absolutely POSITIVE was not normal.

But despite how worried this made me, I knew that it wasn't my place to say something. The two had seemed a bit off ever since this morning, starting with Lukas' more than harsh insults. I thought that the two had made up when I saw them hugging in the living room, but it seemed I was wrong. Or maybe this was just how they acted at school? So many things could be wrong, or I was completely overreacting to something that wasn't even my business in the first place. I decided to push it to the back of my mind, and simply crossed over to Su-San's side of the car, giving him a quick glance. He ruffled my hair lightly, and I couldn't help but smile.

"Ner'ous?" He asked me, and I nodded honestly. I figured it was pretty obvious, so why even try to hide it? He let his arm fall from my hair to my shoulder, giving me a quick squeeze before dropping it to his side.

"It's gonna be fine." He assured me, leading me forward to the entrance, Mathias and Lukas following quietly behind us.

"I hope so..." I murmured, not really meaning to say it out loud, but I could hear the displeasure on Su-San's voice when he spoke.

"Ah'll make sure it's fine." He declared, and I couldn't stop the grin that formed on my lips.

"Thanks Su-San! It has to be better than my first day sophomore year... I mean, you'll be here, so it's already a lot brighter!" I said, trying to convince myself more than him. He nodded shortly, opening the glass doors for me, forcing me to realise that we had reached the entrance. The cool air conditioning savagely attacked my face, and I shivered. My old school

hadn't had any air conditioning, so this was definitely a new thing to me. I just hoped that it wasn't this cold in all of the classrooms...

As I stepped in, I realised that this was going to be a vastly different experience than what I used to. There were teenagers EVERYWHERE, sitting on staircases, at tables, some eating, others talking, several texting (which I groaned at internally.) Some were dancing, their Ipods blasting music loud enough for the small crowds around them to hear. Others still, the ones that were easily labeled as sophomores, looked around at the older teens with fear and awe. I must look like one of them, seeing as I too was gawking. I looked around, trying to take it all in, trying to assign people to cliques, though it was rather difficult, as a lot of the people around me would intermingle, shattering my attempt of trying to group them. I successfully located what I assumed were the choir kids, as they were all singing the same song in perfect harmony. I made a note to try and avoid the faces I saw. (I tend to butt heads with people that take choir classes... I don't really know why, it's just something I've noticed.) I also found the very obvious group of Jocks, but I was surprised to see that several of them would go to other groups of people and socialize with them as well. One of the particularly scary looking jocks struck me as very odd when he left the side of the other scary looking jocks, and went up to a boy, clearly carrying the case of an instrument, one that looked very much like a clarinet, or maybe a trumpet, and did NOT beat him senseless, instead hugging the boy around the middle. Surely that couldn't be counted as normal behavior! Boys don't just hug each other randomly. I tried to push it to the back of my mind as my attention was snapped to a boy that had just knelt down in front of another. The one that knelt looked to be a senior, while the one still standing, who looked like he was incredibly annoyed for some reason, seemed more like a junior. The older boy, his skin a tanned brownish color, suddenly started belting a Spanish song to the younger, whose eyes widened a fraction, before his expression turned dangerously angry. I turned to Su-San and raised an eyebrow, and he sighed.

“The 'un on the floo' is An'onio, and the angry 'un is Romano. An' 'fore ya ask, 'es, he is serenadin' 'im.” He explained, and I turned back to the two. Antonio had stopped singing, and was now cradling his head, which led me to believe that Romano had hit him. I could hear little clips of the swears coming from the younger's mouth, the most obvious was “bastard”, followed by many in a language I didn't recognize let alone understand. My eyes widened, not sure how to take it all in. This was quite the... Diverse? Yes, that's a good word for it... Group. To be perfectly honest, I was a little overwhelmed.

To my relief, Su-San steered me away from the mass of people, and into the office. I noticed that Lukas and Mathias had wandered off on their own, most likely to find their own friends. Though it made me a little sad to see them go, it meant I had a little time alone with Su-San, even if it was shared by the massive mob of unfamiliar people.

“Um, Su-San? Why are we going in here?” I asked him, though I didn't resist as I was led into the room.

“Ya misse' schedu'e pickup, so ya need ta get i' here.” He explained, and I nodded in understanding, following him up to the counter. An older woman smiled at me from her desk, her voice chipper when she spoke.

“Hi guys! What can I do for you?” She asked, her voice sugary sweet. I tried my best to smile back.

“Um, I need to get my schedule?” I asked more than informed. Her smile widened further, to my utter amazement, and she motioned for me to come to her desk. I did so, Su-San following close behind me.

“Alright sweetie, what grade are you in?” She asked.

“U-Um, 11th...” I answered quietly, but she didn't seem to think anything of it. She bent

down under her desk and resurfaced with a large crate, which she sat on her desk.

“And what's your last name?” She inquired.

“Väinämöinen.” I replied, and she chuckled lightly, pricking at my curiosity.

“I swear, we get the strangest names here! Isn't that right, Mr. Oxenstierna?” She explained, turning to smile at Su-San as well. He offered her a nod, and she started to flip through the crate. After a few moments, she produced a paper, made a little noise to signify her accomplishment, and handed me what I found out was my schedule. “There you go! Can I assume that Mr. Oxenstierna will be showing you around?” She asked, and I nodded, offering her a quick thank you. Su-San then led me out, giving a small wave to the friendly woman.

“Good luck boys!” She called, and I realised that I was probably going to need it.

After I had been led a little distance from the office, Su-San stuck his hand out, demanding me to share my schedule with him. I obliged pretty willingly, relinquishing the paper quickly. He scanned it, and seemed to sigh in relief.

“Yer in mah homeroom.” He announced, and I cocked my head to the side, not sure what exactly that meant. “Ya stay in yer homeroom mos' o' the day, 'cept fer elec'tives.” He explained, and it made me smile.

“Oh! That's good then! Alright, well, do we have any electives together?” I asked, and he nodded curtly, but it seemed a little pained. “Um... Which one?” I pried. He paused, then sighed.

“Paren'ing...” He muttered, and I couldn't help but laugh. I hadn't had any choice in my schedule, they just put me in classes that were left over. The only class that I might have chosen was an art class, which I had had my mother call and request. But Su-San had turned in a class request form, which meant that he, more than likely, got his first choice in classes. So, that in mind, it appears that Su-San asked to take a parenting class.

“Really? You signed up for parenting?” I asked, still laughing. I saw his cheeks flush a little at my teasing, but he nodded. “What for? Are you planning on having kids soon?” I asked, though the humor was only external this time. If he answered yes, it would definitely put a huge damper on my mood. To my relief, he shook his head.

“No, bu' Ah thin' i's a good class ta take, tha' way ya know 'ow ta deal with stuff when ya ge' older.” He explained, and I nodded, deciding to drop that one. “An' we 'ave psychology toge'her.” He added on dully.

I put my hand out, requesting my schedule back, and he handed it over. Glancing over it, I learned that my other elective was Advanced Placement Studio Art, much to my relief. But as I read through my classes, I realised that art was the only one that would be missing a Su-San. Looks like that meanie-face fate decided to be nice to me this year.

“Well, I'm officially loving my schedule! Anyway, what happened to Lukas and Mathias?” I asked, changing the subject. Su-San shrugged, beginning to walk towards an, amazingly, vacant table.

“Still go' twen'y minutes till school star's.” He informed me, and I nodded, sitting down in the chair next to his, dropping my bag onto the table. I took this down time as another chance to observe the teens that I would be spending the next two years of my life with, still not sure what I was to make of them. I watched as a blonde girl ran full speed towards a brunette boy, and tackle him to the ground. She then proceeded to sit on him, much to the boy's apparent displeasure. But to my surprise, he didn't resist, simply allowing the girl to sit on. The girl seemed to get bored, and stood up. But as she did, I realised that this girl wasn't a girl at all! She was a he! (How the hell was I supposed to know? His nails are better looking than my mom's, and his clothes look they had been ripped from a model!) Su-San seemed to follow my line of vision, as he explained.

“The Blon'e is Feliks, brune'e is Toris.” He informed me. “They da'e.” He said simply, and I next rested my gaze on the scary looking jock, who was still talking with the small instrument boy.

“Big 'un is Lud'ig, 'lil 'un is Feliciano. They da'e too.” I nodded, silently wondering if everyone around here was gay and dating. Surely not! I turned to a new pair, both blonde's, one with huge eyebrows, the other shoveling a hamburger into his mouth. I groaned, just the thought of eating a burger in one bite like that making my stomach upset.

“Eyebrows is Arthur, an' the clea'ly American 'un is Alfred. They... No 'un really knows.” Su-San left off eerily. I chuckled, nodding. I looked at a clock that I had discovered on a wall, which informed me that ten minutes had passed as I people-watched with Su-San. I was surprised by a lot of the couples in this school... Social classes almost didn't seem to exist, as the few couples I had found seemed to say. The jock and the band geek, the... girl-boy? Transvestite seemed to take it too far... We'll go with feminine blonde and the shy looking brunette. Then there were those two from when I walked in, The Spanish guy and the angry one... Everyone seemed to be friendly with each other, and it was surprisingly refreshing. I couldn't help but notice the lack of females though... I had only seen a small handful of them. Perhaps that explained the abundance of apparently gay couples.

I was about to ponder how people reacted to homosexuals here, when I heard some yelling, and my head, instinctively, turned to investigate the noise. To my surprise, not too far from where Su-San and I were sitting, I could see Lukas and Mathias, both staring at each other. As I tried to focus in on them, I realised that they were both glaring. A red light went off in my mind, as I deciphered, from their faces and postures, that this one wasn't a play fight. That wasn't good.

I flew up, and I noticed that Su-San did the same, and we both worked our way towards them. A few people were watching the two, who seemed to be squaring off, but no one was really showing too much interest, aside from Su-San and I. Did they not understand what was about to happen? I guess that people that hadn't been around the two of them for very long wouldn't be able to tell the difference between a playful little lover's spat and a full on fight in the making. But surely they would keep it verbal?

Su-San and I made it to them, and I noticed that there was a boy standing directly behind Lukas, looking a little worried. He had silvery hair, which struck me as odd for a moment, but I quickly turned back to Lukas. His whole demeanor had shifted, and he now looked less bored and annoyed, more pissed and aggressive. I flinched, wondering how on earth Mathias wasn't cringing under that glare. I turned to gauge his reaction, but flinched yet again when I found the same intensity on his usually smiling face. I tried to understand what was happening, neither one of them giving me so much as a hint. But finally, Mathias opened his mouth.

“Take it back!” He shouted at Lukas, who shook his head, still glaring.

“I won't. It's true, and I'll say so. Maybe you shouldn't be so quick to insult my brother.” He spat, and I looked to the boy behind him, realization hitting me hard. This was Emil! I had never asked how old he was, but apparently only a few years younger!

“Well maybe if he'd man the fuck up, and stop being such a fucking pussy I wouldn't...” Mathias snapped right back, and my eyes widened, as I saw Emil flinch.

“What right do you have to say that?! What the fuck makes you think for a moment that you are any better than him?” Lukas demanded, his glare intensifying.

“Well, I don't know, I don't come running up to my teenage brother, practically crying, then cling to him for dear life like a fucking five year old!” Mathias replied with anger lacing his words, and I had to keep myself from smacking him. What a stupid reason to fight!

“Look, I don't know what the hell your problem is! He hasn't seen me in weeks! And what the fuck is wrong with a brother wanting a hug?” He asked, his words just as harsh.

“God, Lukas! I swear your into fucking incest! You pay more fucking attention to your fucking brother than your fucking boyfriend!” Mathias accused, and Lukas growled.

“Mathias, you are overreacting! I don't know what the fuck your problem is today, but you need to back the fuck off!” Lukas warned dangerously, and people finally seemed to notice the two, and they began to gather around.

“Yeah, sure I'm overreacting! I mean, it's perfectly normal for brothers to fuck! You know, everyone does it!” He declared sarcastically.

“MATHIAS!” Lukas snarled, and I watched in horror as he lunged, tackling Mathias to the ground, limbs tangling as both boys tried to get the better of the other. All I knew was that fists were flying, and suddenly the crowd seemed to double, encircling the now physically fighting couple. I gasped, running into the seemingly forbidden fighting ground, Su-San close on my tail. I narrowly avoided getting punched by Mathias, then reached down and did my best to pull Lukas away. He came off kicking, struggling to get back to Mathias, who was fighting just as hard with Su-San to get at Lukas. But I held tight, dragging him backwards. The crowd parted for me, allowing me to get him further away, and I dragged him all the way to the front doors, where I finally let him go, quickly moving to stand in front of him, successfully cornering him. He glared at me hatefully, and though I flinched, I did not move.

“What are you doing?” I demanded, giving him my best look of reprimandation.

“What does it look like I'm doing?” He snapped. “He fucking deserves it!”

“Lukas?” A small voice called, and I turned to see Emil, or at least the boy I assumed was Emil, running towards us. He glanced at me, then knelt in front of his brother. “A-are you okay?” He asked, and Lukas nodded reluctantly.

“I'm fine. Still pissed.” He stated bluntly, and Emil winced.

“I'm sorry... I didn't mean to start a fight!” He exclaimed, and Lukas sighed.

“No, it wasn't your fault at all. Mathias is being a real asshole today... I don't know what his fucking problem is, but he needs to get a fucking grip.” Lukas growled, and Emil pulled a packet of tissues out of his pocket, dabbing one against Lukas' torn lip.

“But he was only angry because of me... I'm sorry, I just got really excited to see you...”

“No. Mathias overreacted.” Lukas assured, then sighed. “I... I guess I did too...” He admitted, though he glared. “Still, that last bit was taking it too far.” He finished, then looked up to me.

“Tino, you can move. I'm not going to go after him again.” He informed me, and I blushed, moving to kneel next to him as well.

“I'm sorry Lukas, I just... I never thought that you would ever...” I trailed off, and he sighed.

“Tino, I'm sorry you saw us like that. That's the first time we've really come to blows like that... I mean, we got into a slap-fight a few years ago, but we've never really thrown punches... I-I guess that we're both a little too stressed out right now... I'm sorry.” He apologized, lowering his gaze. My gaze softened considerably, and I stood up, taking his hand to pull him along with me.

“Why don't we go try to clean you up a little?” I asked, and he nodded, Emil followed after us quietly. I brought him to the bathroom and had him sit on the counter where the sinks were, wetting some paper towels and wiping away any blood I saw. As far as I could tell, only his lip was bleeding, though his arms had a few bruises down them, and I found splotches of Mathias' blood on him as well. When I had looked at Mathias as he was being pulled away by Su-San, I had taken a small inventory, and he seemed to have gotten the short end of the stick in this fight. His nose had been bleeding, and I could see that he had scratches everywhere. And I had seen Lukas pulling at his hair before I managed to get him

off, so clearly the taller had to be a little worse for wear. After I had done the best I could, Lukas gave me a curt thanks, then hopped down.

“Well, I suppose I'll be in trouble when I go out... So I'll talk to you both later. Oh, but before I forget, Tino, this is Emil. Emil, this is Tino. I'm staying with him for now.” He explained, and I gave a small smile to the younger boy. He simply looked me up and down, then turned back to his brother.

“Alright, anyway, I hope you both have a nice first day, sorry for the commotion so early.” He said simply, then walked out. Emil and I both followed, and, sure enough, a man was waiting outside the door for Lukas. I heard him sigh, and he followed the man, no questions asked. He disappeared into the office, leaving me alone with Emil. As I turned to him, he seemed to look very lost, and I tried my best not to show that I felt the same way, all by myself without Su-San or Lukas.

“U-Um, well, it's nice to meet you! Lukas has told me about you, so it's great to put a name to a face!” I tried, and he just looked at me, his face falling to one of boredom, much like his brother.

“Sure.” He said simply, and I scratched the back of my head awkwardly. Thankfully, Su-San decided to find me and save me at that moment.

“Fin?” He called, and I smiled thankfully, motioning him over.

“Hei Su-San! Is Mathias in the office?” I asked, and he nodded. I sighed, overwhelmed at how my first day was going.

“He coole' down a bi'.” He informed me, and I nodded.

“So did Lukas. How's his nose?” I asked, and Su-San's lips twitched.

“He swore i' was broke'. Bu' i' stopped bleedin' after a bit. Lukas go' 'im good.” He muttered, clearly impressed.

“No kidding! Lukas barely has a scratch! His lip is busted pretty good though.” I said, filling him in. “Oh! And I nearly forgot! This is Emil!” I exclaimed, gesturing to the silent boy standing behind me. Su-San glanced at him, then offered only a small nod of acknowledgement.

“Berwald.” He said quietly, and Emil nodded.

“Pleasure.” He replied, just as simply, then turned to look at something else. I was about to fret over the awkwardness that was falling, but, luckily for me, the bell rang, signaling the beginning of classes. Emil slipped into the crowd with a scarcely audible “bye”, leaving Su-San and I to our devices. He led me through the now bustling crowd of people going to their classrooms, and I kept close behind him, having perfected the technique of using tall people as a shield while traversing hallways many years ago. He brought me to our classroom, then allowed me to pick our seats. I glanced around, then decided on the table by the window, and he followed behind me as we sat. As the other teens filed in and took their seats, the conversation slowly made its way to me, and the hot topic at the moment seemed to be the fight that had happened so early in the school year. I frowned, but tried to push it to the back of my mind as the teacher came in, and the ever familiar and dreaded introductions began.

What does Riya have to say about this? Nothing really, your writer is just in a violent mood... Lately I've really wanted to tackle someone and beat them to a bloody pulp. >:3 Me, a psychopath? NEVER! What would ever make you say that? But on the serious side, I'm not a physically aggressive person. I took a hostility test in my psychology class and everything, and my results labeled me as an easily irritated person, full of resentment. So basically, definition wise, it means that I silently hate EVERYTHING, and mentally beat the living shit out of things, while on the outside I'm smiling. Yeah... that scares me too...

Anyway, Norge and Den had a fight, like, for cereal! Punches and everything! But not to worry, this is Den and Norge we speak of! Things will work out somehow! And look, EMIL! Being... I don't know... I'm not used to writing him yet... So I'm not very confident... If he is severely out of character, I apologize, let me feel his character out, I'll get the hang of him soon enough!

Hei! We totally went to school, finally! Chapter sixteen of a highschool fic, and we finally see highschool for the first time! And we get to see some of our favorite countries being... Themselves! Woo! Don't worry, they will all get a chance to shine a bit more. These were just some quick glances at them.

Thanks as always for reading, and feedback is appreciated!

KuroRiya
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Chapter 17

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

As I've said before, introductions were fun the first few years. But eventually, there comes a time in every child's life, when they are forced to realise that, should they say something socially incorrect, they could end up ridiculed for the remainder of their school lives, based directly on their word choices during introductions. I, along with the rest of the class, didn't even bother to hide our sighs of annoyance. Really, what was the point of this? We would all eventually get to know each other, one way or the other. Still, no one would ever work up the guts to say anything about it, so we continued with the repeated exercise, year after year. The instructions were ever the same, your name, and a hobby/interest, otherwise something you did over the summer.

We started up with the blonde boy from earlier... Feliks?

"Like, hi everyone! My name is Feliks! And hmmm... what do I like to do? Oh! I totally like to paint my nails! Like, every night!" He cried out to the class, and my smile was forced as he sat back down. Surely it was impossible for a boy to be so much of a valley girl? There was no way that he could truly be so... I shook my head to dispel the thoughts as Felik's boyfriend stood, smiling at the class through his blush.

"Hello, I'm Toris. I traveled back to Lithuania with Feliks this summer to visit my grandparents." He announced, and I assumed that meant that he also came from Lithuania. He took his seat next to his boyfriend, and I saw the pout on the blonde boy's face.

"Um, Hello! Liet, you totally forgot to tell them about all the dates we went on! And, like, how much we made out..." At that point, Toris managed to cover the blonde's mouth, his face beat red, and Feliks struggling. The teacher, seemingly unfazed by this, gestured for the class to move on. Next up was the small instrument boy from earlier, sitting next to the angry boy. Now that I was looking at them together, they looked incredibly alike, enough so that I could call them twins.

"Hey everyone! My name is Feliciano! I play the trumpet. And this is my big brother Romano! He's mean to me sometimes, but I still love him!" The boy practically sang, and I saw the irritation form on the other boy's face.

"Shut up you stupid bastard!" He shouted, and the teacher sent him a glare.

"You see what I mean? He's always mean to me!" Feliciano concluded, sitting down next to his brother, who didn't even bother making an introduction.

Skipping Romano, we came to an Asian girl with very long hair. She stood out to me, seeing as she was the only girl I saw in the class. She rose, and gave a short bow to everyone.

"Hello, my name is Mei. I went to China with my big brother Yao this summer." She said quietly. I looked at her in awe after hearing about her trip to China. That was a place I never even dreamed of going, but she said it as if it were an everyday occurrence! The same happened with Toris... Surely so much traveling wasn't normal? Then again, a lot of things were proving to be different here.

Next up was the "clearly American" boy, who, true to his title, was eating ANOTHER hamburger. I shuddered, wanting to cry. Didn't the teacher notice that a student was eating in his class? Or was that acceptable here? Or was this boy a special case?

"Oh, It's totally my turn! Hey dudes! My name is Alfred, but you can all call me the HERO!"

He shouted, and I must have been gaping like a fish at how brash he was. “And I spent my summer with my buddy Tony, and we did all kinds of Heroic stuff, and played scary video games, and discovered Canadia, and...”

“Thank you Alfred. Next.” The teacher cut him off. Though Alfred was clearly displeased at not getting to continue, he sat down obediently, and pulled a... Shake? Seriously? Wow... Yes, he pulled a shake out of his bag and set to work on that. I looked to the teacher to gauge his reaction to this development, but he seemed indifferent, if not a little baffled at how his class was turning out to be this year.

After Alfred sat down, another blonde stood, and I flinched as he threw a glare around to everyone.

“My name is Vash. Leave my sister alone if you want to live. That is all.” And he reclaimed his seat. I quirked an eyebrow at that. Was that a death-threat? It sounded an awful lot like one...

Finally, we reached the boy directly next to me, and he stood. As I realised that I was next, my mind frantically tried to piece together a feasible introduction. All I managed to catch out of his speech was that his name was Eduard. As he sat, I started to shake a bit, standing up and immediately feeling dizzy. Should I truly tell them something about myself? Or should I just take the easy route?

“U-Um, Hi? My name is Tino... I... I just moved here this summer... Uh... Yeah...” I finished pathetically, and sat down. Yeah, I played it safe, using the move as an excuse not to delve into my own life. Surely moving here wasn't a good enough reason to beat someone senseless? But as I looked around, I found that everyone was staring at me with piqued interest. I let out a little gasp. Surely I hadn't already put my 'PLEASE BEAT ME UP FOR I AM PATHETIC AND VULNERABLE' sign on! Luckily it was Su-San's turn, and his massive height distracted the attention from me.

“N'me's Berwald. Ah like Woo'Shop.” He concluded, and I chuckled at how brief it had been. It seemed so completely Su-San, the way he completely clipped out every word that was unnecessary. He sat back down, and the teacher nodded to us.

“Alright, well, it appears we are missing four students... Lukas and Mathias...” He began, and I winced a bit at the memory of this morning.

“Oh, dude, those two totally got into this awesome battle this morning! Like, there was blood and everything! I took pictures to show Tony! And they...”

“Thank you, Alfred.” The teacher snapped yet again, and Alfred pouted at being cut off for the second time that day. “And the third is a Natalia? Does anyone know where she is?” He asked, and everyone shook their heads in unison, and I noticed looks of distaste upon the faces of many. Feliks, especially, looked distressed at the news of having this girl in the class. “And Matthew? Anyone seen him?” He asked, and everyone looked at each other as if they didn't know what he was talking about.

“I-I'm right here!” A small voice called, and my eyes snapped to a blonde boy sitting right next to Alfred. How had I not noticed him earlier?

“Oh! Were you late?” The teacher asked, and Matthew shook his head. “Well... Why didn't you introduce yourself like everyone else?” He asked, and Matthew frowned.

“I tried, but you skipped me.” He replied. The teacher looked apologetic.

“Okay, well, why don't you introduce yourself now?”

“Alright. My name is Matthew, and I like...” He began.

“Thank you Matthew, speak up next time.” The teacher said, cutting him off. My eyes widened, and Matthew sighed. I looked at him curiously, but he seemed used to this type of treatment.

“Alright, well, aside from those four, we have an exchange student that will be arriving in a few days. So that brings us to a class of Fifteen? That seems awfully small...” He trailed off, confusing me. Fifteen was a pretty big class... Wasn't it?

“Well, regardless, welcome to homeroom. I suppose I'll be seeing a lot of you all for the rest of the year, so let's at least try to get along, alright? My name is Mr. Raimondo. I cannot disclose the events that I partook in this summer, for fear of loosing my job.” He finished, moving to stand in front of the class. I couldn't help but look at him with a bit of confusion. A teacher did something that couldn't be disclosed? Was that... Possible? I shook my head, assuring myself that that statement wasn't real. It simply didn't exist. Teachers never did bad things. Never.

With introductions out of the way, Mr. Raimondo began passing papers out to us, things like syllabuses, contracts, health papers, etc. I sighed, already feeling overwhelmed with the paperwork. The only thing that offered me comfort was the knowledge that most of this was for my mother to fill out. I tucked all of it away into my backpack, slipping it into a folder to avoid crinkling anything. After the papers were handed out, he explained how our day would proceed, and when we would be going to lunch, followed by the time slots for our electives. He was surprised when he ran out of stuff to explain, saying that it went a lot faster than he had expected. After attempting to sound prepared for about ten minutes by listing off units and whatnot, he gave up, and said we could use the rest of class time as we liked. Everyone seemed to like the sound of that, and they started turning around to talk to one another. I looked up at Su-San, smiling gently.

“Well, nobody seems too bad so far... But they all seem to know each other so well...” I pointed out, and he nodded.

“Ja. We've all 'ad each o'her in classes be'ore.” He explained, and I nodded.

“Alright, I guess that makes sense... I knew everyone at my old high school...” I admitted. I was about to inquire about the Matthew boy, when who should walk in, but Mathias and Lukas? My face brightened immediately at the sight of them, and I motioned them over. Lukas gave me a face that said 'hold on a sec', and walked up to the teacher. I saw Lukas' mouth moving, then Mr. Raimondo nodded a few times, handing both boys papers. They were obviously instructed to have a seat afterward, as Lukas started making his way towards me, trailed by Mathias. I was relieved... No... OVERJOYED, to see that their fingers were laced.

“Hei you two! What's up?” I asked as soon as they sat down. Lukas sighed, putting his head down on the desk.

“Not too much at this point.” He said, sounding very tired. I raised an eyebrow and looked to Mathias for a clue as to what had happened, but he just shrugged and started rubbing Lukas' back tenderly.

“Alright, that's nice... Um... What happened?” I asked, trying not to sound too eager, but failing miserably. Again, Lukas sighed, moving so his chin was against the edge of the table, holding his head up so he could speak.

“They had us separated at first, talking to us in different rooms. Then I guess we both explained that we're dating, and then they decided to question us together. So they asked us what started the fight, and we both insisted that it was the other, and we got all pissed off again, so they sent a counselor in, and she talked to us for quite a while. She made us talk to each other about it, and all that good stuff that comes with counseling. After that she left us alone for a while, and I guess we kinda just made up? I suppose we both realised how utterly stupid the whole thing had been. So after we figured it out, they let us off with a warning

since we have a clean record thus far.” He finished, and then collapsed back onto his face. I smiled, glad that they weren't in too much trouble.

“So... All better now?” I tried, and he nodded. “Great! You guys had me so worried!”

“Tino... I'm sorry... We obviously don't handle stress very well...” He admitted, turning his face to me and frowning.

“Oh, its alright! I mean, I don't either! I get sick! Like, literally!” I assured, and he offered me the smallest of smiles.

“Well, sorry to have worried you. Anyway, you got your schedule I take it?” He inquired, and I nodded, pulling it from my pocket. He took it and scanned quickly. “It looks like I get to have a friend in Art this year after all...” He trailed, and I smiled warmly, relieved at having a buddy in all of my classes. “We have parenting together as well... But Mathias is my partner, I'm afraid...” He said, and I smiled, pointing a thumb at Su-San.

“That's alright, Su-San can be mine. But... Aren't we supposed to be paired with girls?” I asked, the confusion hitting me as I contemplated it. He shook his head quickly though.

“If you haven't noticed, we hardly have any girls here. No one really knows why... But it's commonly accepted around here that most partnering, in any sense of the word, will be male-male.” He explained, and I nodded.

“So it isn't just me? There really is a lack of girls? That's a relief! I thought I was going crazy!” I exclaimed, eliciting a smile from him.

“No, you aren't crazy. And, if I'm not mistaken, I do believe it is time for P.E....” He was cut off by a bell ringing, and everyone in the classroom stood, heading out to their next period. He smirked at his accuracy, and allowed Mathias to pull him from his seat. I chuckled, standing up as well and turning to Su-San. He nodded, and I lead the way to the door. Once we had made it into the crowded hallway, I fell into a slow trot, then gestured to get his attention.

“Hei, I didn't see P.E. on my schedule...” I said, worried that I wasn't going to the right place.

“I's not no'ed. They coun' I' as par' o' homeroom. A few classes go ta lunch righ' now, some go ta elec'ives, then we all swi'ch.” He tried to explain. I nodded, though still confused.

“So... Other people will be in P.E. while we eat lunch?” He nodded. “Okei... But why isn't the time when we go written on the schedule?” I tried, and he shrugged.

“We're in homeroom A11. There is also a homeroom A10 and A12. The numbers stand for the grade that each class holds. All of the Homeroom A's go to P.E. at the same time. After us, all of the Homeroom B's will go. They do that because some kids have electives that only meet once a day, like Berwald's woodshop, and AP art. Were we to be in a different elective, such as French, we would be in a different homeroom, and we would be going to French right now as opposed to P.E. Does that make more sense?” Lukas explained, and I nodded.

“Yeah, I get it! So what you're saying is that P.E. depends on the class, not the individual?” I concluded, and he nodded.

“Yes, that's right. I'm guessing that your old school was different?” To which I nodded.

“Very different. We didn't have 'homerooms' at all. We had seven hours a day, and we moved rooms ever forty-five minutes. We just had P.E. whenever we could fit it in.” I replied, noticing that we had found the gym.

“Ah, yes, I've heard of that. But, as you've probably noticed while listening to everyone here, a lot of our students are foreigners. To please their parents, our school board decided to adopt the homeroom system. It apparently makes the parents feel better, because they feel like their kids are making better friends, and that they will be overall safer if there is less time in the hallways for people to get into fights, et cetera, et cetera.” He concluded. I chuckled at his sarcastic reasoning, following him into the locker room, Su-San following close behind me,

and Mathias in front of Lukas. As we walked in, Emil came up to Lukas and Mathias, looking a bit worried. But Mathias gave him a grin and apologized “For being an epic asshole,” as he put it. Emil gave the smallest of smiles, showing his relief, and he joined our little entourage. When we got there, a coach was waiting for us. We were instructed to sit down on the floor, which we all did. I sighed as I did, never having been a fan of floor sitting. My feet always fell asleep, then I had trouble standing, which is never a good thing, and walking was a whole other story in and of itself, and basically it is a BAD thing for me! Su-San seemed to sense my discomfort, and pulled me into his lap.

I immediately felt my face heat, but I gave him a small smile of thanks, regardless. Internally, I couldn't help but wonder what people would be making of this whole situation, but as I glanced around, no one really seemed to have noticed. Granted, that might have something to do with the fact that Su-San and I were in the very back, but still... At my old school, if one guy so much as looked at another the wrong way, the entire school seemed to know. I shrugged it off, leaning back a bit to give my back a rest.

“Grandpa! It's so nice to see you! Romano thinks so too, he's just being stubborn!” Feliciano called, and I saw the coach's smile widen.

“Hey Feliciano, Romano, it's nice to see you too... But we're supposed to keep the whole 'related' thing on the down low...” The coach replied, scratching his head awkwardly, and I saw the Italian boy salute.

“Right! Sorry grandpa.... I mean coach!” He corrected himself, causing the coach to force a smile.

“...Anyway, hi everyone! I'm gonna be the coach this year. What is my name, you ask? Just call me Coach. Will I ever tell you my real name? Doubtful. And if I find out either of you told, I will be visiting you, very late at night, and let me tell you, you'll be puking from laughing so hard when I get done tickling you.” He said, glaring at the two Italians in front of him, both of whom sat up straighter.

“Alright, well, I'm assuming most of you know the drill. You'll be getting your uniforms today, and choosing lockers. After that, we'll go up and sit on the bleachers with the girls, and you guys can do the socializing thing that teens these days do.” He finished, and everyone was about to get back up, but he quickly turned back around, clapping his hands.

“Oh! Right! I was supposed to tell you guys about sexual harassment!” He exclaimed, which earned him several chuckles. “Hey! This is kind of a serious matter!” He exclaimed, and that got even me to laugh. I looked over, and Lukas was smiling as well. He too had claimed a lap, namely Mathias'. As I returned my attention to the front, I realised that a lot of the guys were also in laps, or holding hands, or something similar. For example, the scary jock from before, who was apparently in A12, was holding the hand of Feliciano. And the Spanish guy... Antonio? He was attempting to hug Romano. There were several more doing such things. That definitely helped me to relax. If the community could accept homosexuality, confessing someday would be SO much easier. Still, that isn't a topic I'm ready to breach, not just yet.

“Alright, seriously guys, I have to talk to you about this. If I see any of you touching the girls...” He looked around at us. “Or the guys... In an inappropriate and/or unwanted way, I immediately have to send you to the office. So... Don't do it. And saying stuff can be considered harassment too! And please, PLEASE, for the love of all things decent, PLEASE DON'T STARE INTENTLY AT EACH OTHER IN THE SHOWERS!” He cried, and almost ever junior and senior head turned to stare a single student. I looked at him curiously, gauging his reaction to this attention. He towered over almost everyone, even sitting, just about as tall as Su-San. His hair was a fair whitish blonde, and his most defining feature was the scarf

around his neck, clearly out of place this time of year. He simply offered everyone a huge grin, and they all looked away awkwardly. I felt a cold sweat go down my back, but tried to ignore it as he continued.

“Also, please refrain from releasing sexual tensions in my locker room, okay? I'm sure we are all aware of what happened last year...” He said quietly, sending a look Lukas and Mathias' way, and I furrowed my brow in confusion, making a mental note to ask Su-San about it later. “Because of that, I'm not even supposed to allow you guys within five feet of each other, but I know better than to try and enforce that... All I ask is that you keep your sex lives out of here, okay?” He finished, and everyone nodded obediently.

“Alright! Cool! The uniforms are in those boxes over there. Choose wisely, for these are yours for the rest of the year! After you grab a uniform, grab a locker, put them inside, and write the combination down somewhere. It should be on a piece of tape on the back of the lock. Make sure you take it off afterward, or someone might get into your locker!” He said, then gave us a 'shoo' motion, causing everyone to get up and rush over to the boxes. Luckily enough for me, the boxes were just behind where we had sat, so I pretty much got first choice. Granted, it didn't take me long, seeing as they were organized by size, so I just had to hold them up quickly and confirm that they would fit right, before I squeezed my way out through the crowd. Su-San followed suit, and Mathias, Lukas, and Emil joined us soon after. I smiled at them, and we all went to a small aisle of lockers, claiming ourselves a little corner. We chose lockers sided by side, putting the uniforms inside, then I simply pulled the tape from the back of the lock and stuck it to my schedule for safe keeping. Lukas quirked an eyebrow at that.

“U-um... What?” I asked him, and he shook his head.

“Nothing... I just never thought of that... So much easier than writing it down...” He trailed, doing the same with his. I chuckled, proud to have done something clever for once in my life. The other boys began to find their own lockers, and eventually everyone had claimed themselves a spot. After we had all settled in, the coach called to us, instructing for us to go upstairs and sit in the bleachers. We all did so, the five of us bringing up the rear. We sat towards the bottom of the bleachers, all in a row. Lukas and Mathias started explaining what happened to Emil, so I turned to Su-San.

“Hei, Su-San? What happened last year that made the coach have to give that whole little speech?” I asked him curiously.

“Ah... That...”

Chapter End Notes

I REALISE THAT ROMANO'S HUMAN NAME IS LOVINO! Believe me, I am quite a die hard Hetalia fan! But I like the sound of Romano too much to call him Lovino. Who the fuck is Mr. Raimondo? That's Germania. Sorry, but he doesn't have a given name, so I gave him a simple Germanic name. It means Advice/ Protection. Suiting of a teacher, yes?

And if you couldn't guess, Mei is Taiwan. Oh, and the coach is Grandpa Rome. Again, no given names, so I improvised....

So yeah, sorry for the sucky chapter, hopefully I'll do a bit better once they get into the

groove of things... I mean, the first day of school is really just introductions and first impressions, so bear with me! Look forward to the story in the next chapter? Oh! And can anyone guess who the exchange student is? Lolz, I shall leave it to you! Till next time!

Thanks as always for reading, and feedback is appreciated!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 18

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Ah.... Tha'...” Su-San mumbled quietly, and I quirked an eyebrow at his avoidance to the subject. I looked at him expectantly. As he realised that I wasn't planning on relenting, he sighed.

“The coach last year caught Lukas giving Mathias a...” He trailed, gesturing down to his nether regions, and I nodded, getting the idea. I never would have taken Lukas for a fan of public blowjobs... But I guess I hadn't thought he would like handcuffs either. I glanced in the direction of the couple in question, who were still chatting with Emil. I stared for a moment, then shook my head when I started getting mental images of the act. I turned back to Su-San and decided to ask the other question that had been bothering me.

“Okei, why did everyone look at that tall kid with the scarf when he mentioned showers?” I asked, and I saw Su-San's face twist into an actual EMOTION! I gasped as I read the discomfort in his expression.

“Um... 'is name is Ivan. He... Ah... He ten's ta stare a' people in the showers...” He informed, scratching his head. I was a bit surprised, and turned my head to look at the friendly looking boy from before. He was currently smiling at the brun... Toris. Gotta start using names. He was currently smiling at Toris. The brunette didn't seem to return the feeling though, as he looked just as uncomfortable, if not more so, than Su-San. Now that I was looking, his smile was a bit... Intimidating...

I shivered as I turned, hoping never to be on the receiving end of that ominous smile.

“So, where do we go after this?” I inquired.

“Lunch.” Was his simple answer. I smiled, glad to have a break after the first couple hours of school.

“I guess I should ask about that... I know we brought lunches, but is it a closed campus lunch?”

“No. Ya can leave if ya wan', jus' figured you'd wan' ta stay here fer the firs' day.” He said, shrugging. I nodded, offering him a quick smile.

“Yeah, I would. But I can't say that going out a few times would hurt either... Are there any good places to eat around here?” I questioned, and he seemed to contemplate it for a moment, before nodding.

“No' a lo' of people know 'bout it, bu' there's a li'l cafe 'round the back.” He replied, and I tilted my head in confusion.

“Is it far away?” He shook his head. “Then why don't a lot of people know about it?”

“It's pre'y well hidden. Ya have ta go down a' alley ta ge' there.” He explained, and I nodded.

“Oh, alright. Well, we should go sometime! I've never had an off campus lunch before... It'll be exciting!” I exclaimed enthusiastically. And he offered me a lip twitch in return. I grinned happily, then jumped a bit as the bell startled me with the news of class ending. All of the students scrambled from the bleachers, except my little circle of friends. (AKA: Me, Su-San, Lukas, Mathias, and Emil.) We let everyone else pass in an attempt to avoid getting crushed by the overwhelming amount of humans.

After everyone cleared out, we finally stood and began to make our way to the cafeteria. We moved quickly, and as we neared the entrance, Mathias brought up the question that was

likely on all of our minds.

“So, where are we gonna sit?” And we all looked at him thoughtfully. It truly was a good question, but none of us really knew the answer. Another general rule of high school is that the table that you sit at on the first day is the table that you sit at for the rest of the year. So it was wise to sit somewhere that you wouldn't mind sitting for the rest of the year. This in mind, we all did a visual sweep of the cafeteria, trying to locate an appropriate place. And, as luck would have it, we all set our sights on the same table, right in front of the huge windows on the second floor. (And yes, I did marvel a bit about the fact that this school had a two floor cafeteria.) We all glanced at one another, then made our way up, not a word having to be spoken. As we victoriously claimed our seats, I smiled, looking to Su-San for permission to eat. He nodded, pulling his own lunch box out of his bag. I did the same, and started pulling the food that Su-San had made for me out, examining each thing carefully.

“So, how on earth did we get such a great table?” I addressed everyone, gesturing to the courtyard that we could see clearly through the windows. Mathias grinned, wrapping an arm around Lukas' shoulders.

“We have the Scandinavian Advantage!” He announced, and I quirked an eyebrow while everyone else at the table groaned, Su-San included.

“The... Scandinavian Advantage? Do I even want to know?” I asked, and Lukas sighed.

“No, probably not, but he'll tell you anyway, in more words than necessary. So I'll sum it up. This idiot believes that, because we all originate from a Scandinavian country that we have the Norse gods on our side, and blah blah blah, you get the point. He's an idiot.” Lukas finished, and I chuckled.

“Well said, I suppose. But hei, we all really are from Scandinavia! That's weird...” I pointed out, and Mathias laughed, stealing a sandwich from his boyfriend's lunch box.

“Not at all! Our Nordic blood has brought us together!” He announced loudly, and a few people turned to look at him. Lukas rolled his eyes, taking the sandwich from his hands and taking a bite. “Aw, come on babe! That one was mine!” Mathias whined, and I chuckled a bit. As I ate through the food that Su-San had packed me, I thought about how lucky I was. Perhaps fate was making up for all the times it had wronged me, because things were going really well for me here lately. Despite dreading the idea of moving, it turned out to be the thing that brought me back to Su-San. And instead of my usual life of trying to fade into the sidelines in an attempt to remain invisible, I already had some new friends. I had Mathias to bring noise and impulse into the normal silence of the day, then there was Lukas to smack him and tell him to stop should he become too obnoxious. Emil was just a quiet spectator so far, but he seems like he could be just as good a friend as Lukas if he opened up. And then, of course, there was Su-San, the “light” to my life. But I've already told you a lot about him, so I'll refrain from going into another rant, for your sake.

I snapped out of my thoughts, trying to catch up with the conversation that I had missed, and found that Lukas was instructing Mathias on the correct way to eat a sandwich, which he stubbornly insisted that he was already eating correctly. I smiled at them sheepishly, then reached my hand back into my lunchbox in hopes of a dessert. My fingers found a small baggy, and I pulled it out, then gasped with excitement when I saw what I had retrieved.

“Su-San! Where did you get salmiakki?” I asked, opening the bag desperately, having missed my salty favorite. The corner of his lip actually moved up a bit to form a smirk, showing that he was clearly very proud of himself.

“Ah asked ma ta ge' it when she wen' on her business trip the other day.” He replied, and I grinned happily. As I put my tasty morsels into my mouth, I got strange looks for everyone at the table, confusion written on every face but Su-San's. I smiled happily, swallowing what I

had in my mouth.

“Salmiakki is a Finnish candy.” I explained, and they nodded, still curious. I thought it over, and then decided I was feeling generous enough to get a laugh out of today. “Do you guys want to try some?” I asked, and, exchanging a few glances, they all nodded. I held out the bag, and they each took a piece. I saw Su-San shake his head out of the corner of my eye, but I disregarded it. They each put it in their mouths, and chewed for a moment. Then all three faces twisted into absolute horror. I grinned as I gauged the reactions. Lukas looked panicked for a moment, but managed to calm down enough to swallow it and take a huge gulp of his soda. Emil looked around frantically, then found a napkin and spit it out. Mathias, on the other hand, wasn't quite as polite, or calm, about it.

“OH MY FUCKING ODIN THIS IS THE WORST FUCKING THING I HAVE EVER TASTED!!HOLY SHIT HOLY SHIT HOLY SHIT HOLY SHIT!!!!” He wailed, attracting the attention of the entire cafeteria, the cafeteria ladies included. He proceeded to get up and run around in circles, presumably in search of a trashcan to spit into. I tried, and failed, to contain my laughter, putting another piece in my mouth and chewing it slowly. We all waited for Mathias, who had run down the stairs to get to the trashcans, to come back up. He was much calmer as he came up, but his tongue was out, and he still had a look of disgust on his face. He sat down and took the soda that Lukas has taken a drink from previously, and chugged it in an attempt to get rid of the taste. They all then sent glares my way, as well as looks of amazement when I ate another piece.

“Tino... No offense... That was terrible.” Lukas admitted, and I only chuckled.

“None taken. Not a lot of people like Salmiakki. In fact, its only popular in Finland and Germany. It's a very acquired taste, so no worries.” I assured him, finishing off the bag and licking my fingers.

“No kidding! When you said it was a Finnish candy, I assumed that meant it was going to be sweet... That was so salty though!” Emil informed me, and I nodded.

“Sorry, but I really wanted to see your faces. They were pretty funny too!” I said apologetically.

“Ah trie' ta warn ya.” Su-San mumbled, and I smiled at him.

“But that wouldn't have been any fun!” I scolded playfully, closing my lunchbox and shoving it into my bag. They all looked to Su-San quizzically. Mathias shoving food in his mouth, still trying to rid it of the taste.

“Have you tried it before, Berwald?” Lukas asked, and I saw a slight shudder go through Su-San's body. I think I was the only one who noticed it though. I smiled evilly, and nodded.

“Oh, yes, years ago when we were kids. My mom took a picture of his face.” I announced, and he moaned, remembering that I did, in fact, have a picture of that moment.

“Oh yeah? What face did he make?” Mathias finally spoke, and I giggled.

“Have you ever seen him glaring at something. Like, REALLY glaring? Not the normal glare, but an actual angry one?” I asked, and he nodded. “Multiply that by ten.” I said simply. I watched all three think about it, then they all shivered a bit. Luckily for them, the bell rang, and it was time for the next class to begin. Mathias seemed to know where we were going, so we all followed him. Emil, being a year younger, had a different class to attend, so he left our little group with a small wave and quick hug with Lukas. Our destination wasn't too many classrooms down, so we got there pretty quickly.

All of the desks were in groups of four, making squares with the chairs on the outside. On the board were the instructions: Sit next to the person you wish to partner with for the rest of the year. Sit in a group of four. These will be your families.

We glanced around, looking for a good place to sit down. A few students had beat us and had

already picked their seats, but there were still plenty to choose from. Still following Mathias, we sat pretty much in the middle of the room. As we claimed our seats, Mathias offered us a grin.

“So, you two are, like, the aunt and uncle of me and Norge's kid! But who's the guy?” He asked, and I saw him wince in pain as Lukas elbowed him harshly.

“First off, you ass, that's rude, and second off, you're confusing the hell out of Tino.” He spat, and I smiled apologetically at them.

“Aunt and Uncle?” I tried, and Lukas nodded.

“Yes. We have a “life after a baby” unit, where you'll have to carry a fake baby around for a few weeks. We take turns though. Half of the class goes at a time, and the people in your family can help you take care of it. So basically, if this idiot and I go first, you can babysit for us, and vice versa.” He explained, and I smiled.

“Oh, okei! Well, that'll be helpful! But um... Can't we just leave the fake baby on the couch or something when we get home?” I asked, not seeing why it was such a big event. Lukas shook his head.

“No. I mean, you could, but the teacher... He can tell. No one knows how, but he knows if you leave it unattended. And he'll guilt trip you until you admit to it, then he'll fail you.” He finished, and my eyes widened. But I didn't get a chance to ask anything else, as the teacher walked in and began class.

“Hey, everyone have a seat! I know most of you are coming from lunch, but you need to settle down!” He announced, and everyone followed the instructions, though a few grumbled. While everyone was settling in, I looked the teacher over, and wondered if all of the teachers in this school were young. He couldn't be anything over twenty-five, and he looked like the type that acted younger than his age. Maybe it was the spiky blonde hair, maybe it was the utter absence of formal clothing. Whatever it was, he seemed out of place.

Once everyone had a seat, the man cleared his throat, causing us to devote our attention to him.

“Alright. You guys can call me Mr. Filkri. (1) This is parenting class, so if you are in the wrong class, speak now or forever suffer through the trials of simulated parenthood.” He inquired, and though most of us laughed, no one claimed to be in the wrong place. He nodded, then pulled a folder off his desk. “I'm going to take attendance now. Say 'here' if you're here.”

So we all waited for our names to be called, and I smiled as I managed to recognize a pretty big majority of the class. A lot of the boys from P.E. were here, and there was actually more than one girl! (There were three!) He went down the list quickly, check off our names as we said here. After going through us all, he asked about the absences.

“Okei, we're missing a Matthew...” He started, and I heard a sigh.

“Sir, I'm right here.” The familiar voice called, and I turned to the sound with surprise. That was the second time that this had happened! The poor guy was sitting next to a girl, (with huge boobs, might I point out...) The teacher did a double take, then scratched his head.

“Oh... Why didn't you say 'here'?” He asked.

“I did.” Matthew replied, and the teacher furrowed his brow.

“Oh... alright, sorry.” He replied, putting a check next to the name.

“Alright... Well, everyone is here, except for the exchange student. He'll be here in a few days. Is there someone who doesn't have a partner?” He asked, and the guy with the scarf raised his hand, a grin on his face.

“I don't.” He said sweetly, and the girl that was sitting next to Matthew stood up.

“I'll be your partner brother!” She cried, and the scarf bo... Ivan... Names are good. Ivan

cringed a bit, though his smile remained.

"No, Irina (2), that's alright. If you were my partner, that poor boy wouldn't have a partner." He replied, and she sat down with a disappointed look on her face. The teacher watched the exchange awkwardly, then shook his head.

"Alright, well, you... Um..."

"Ivan."

"Ivan, yeah. You'll be partners with the exchange student." He decided, and then pulled papers off of his desk, handing them out to us.

"Alright, these are permission slips that you all need to get signed. Some of the stuff that I show in this class, namely the birth movie, can be pretty disturbing to certain people. I'm sure you've all heard of the guy that fainted a few years ago. So I have to get permission for you guys to watch it." He explained, and I looked at Lukas and Mathias with worry. How could they get permission? Surely their parents wouldn't sign it for them! Could my and Su-San's mothers sign them, since they were, at the moment, technically acting as their guardians? The two of them didn't seem too worried though, so I decided not to dwell on it.

"Alright. If you don't have them already, get phone numbers of everyone at your table, as you will all be working together a lot." He commanded, and most of the students started going through their bags for paper and pencils. The four of us just looked at each other, and started talking.

"So, what are we going to do tonight?" Mathias asked, and I shrugged.

"I don't know... I guess we could all go somewhere, since this is probably the last night that we'll be homework free... But where could we go?" I asked, and they all seemed to contemplate it.

"Um... The beach?" Lukas offered, and I shook my head.

"Su-San and I just went there the other day..."

"WE SHOULD GO CLUBBING!"

"No." Lukas, Su-San and I all said in unison, crushing Mathias' hopes before they even began to form. He jumped a bit at the force of the rejection, then pouted a bit.

"Minigolf?" Lukas tried, and I stuck my tongue out in distaste.

"Yuck... I hate golfing..." I said, and he nodded.

"Me too." He admitted, and I gave him a curious look.

"But then why did you suggest it?" I asked, and he simply shrugged.

"It's one of those places a lot of people go... Thought I would mention it."

"Oh! Oh! I KNOW! LET'S HAVE A PARTY AT TI..."

"No." We all cut him off again, and I chuckled as I realised that we had finished the name for him.

"Jeeze! You all just hate me, don't you?" He sniffed, and Lukas nodded.

"That's right. And besides, you, as a person, are so stupid, that your ideas can easily be labeled stupid as well, and therefore are disqualified." Lukas explained, and Mathias gaped like a fish for a moment, before returning to his sulking.

"Swimming?" I inquired, but Lukas shook his head.

"I don't have a swim suit. Neither does Mathias."

"Hmm..." I hummed, puzzled by the situation. "Well, um... I guess we could..."

"GO TO A STRIP CL..."

"NO!" We shouted this time, earning us a few stares. Mathias huffed, crossing his arms over his chest.

"I was kidding, that time..." He muttered, but we disregarded him.

"Anyway, as I was saying, we can always just do another movie night... I know that's boring,

but it's better than nothing... Unless we come up with something else... Su-San? Any ideas?" I smiled up at him as I asked. He stared at me for a moment, then nodded his head.

"There's tha' Japanese res'aurant downtown." He offered, and Lukas perked up.

"You mean the one with the Karaoke rooms?" He questioned, almost childishly, to which Su-San nodded. Mathias' pout switched to a grin.

"We like that place! The food's good, and it's fun to do the karaoke!" He exclaimed, and Lukas nodded.

"Yes... I don't even like to sing, but it's pretty fun there. Tino?" They all turned to me, and I felt my cheeks heat from the sudden attention.

"U-um... Well, I've never been, but if you all like it, I'm sure it must be great! So sure?" I asked more than answered. But they offered me looks of happiness, each in his own different way.

"Alright, everyone done?" Mr. Filkri asked, and there was a general nodding of heads.

"Good. Hope you all get to know each other. Moving on... Well... Actually, I don't have anything for today... Just... Don't have sex, okay? You'll get pregnant, and you WILL die." He finished, and we all gave him quizzical looks. I guess we all decided to shrug it off though, as we went back to talking with one another.

"Okei, so, we're going to this Japanese restaurant, right?" Nods all around. "And there's karaoke?" Again, nods. "Alright, well, should we invite Emil too?" This one was contemplated.

"Well... I'm sure he would like to go, but I don't know if mom would let him... But I can ask him, if you guys are alright with it." Su-San and I both nodded, and he smiled a bit. "Alright then, I'll ask him when school lets out."

"Alright, I'll look forward to it!"

Chapter End Notes

(1): Mr. Filkri Is Netherlands! Again, no official name, so I chose one. Filkri means "intelligent person" Seemed like a teacher-y word.

(2): Irina is Ukraine. Also no official name.

Thanks for reading, and feedback is appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Art and Psychology went by pretty fast, just like the rest of the day had. More papers, more talking. I followed Lukas to the art room, then Su-San came and led me to psychology while Lukas and Mathias went to a keyboarding class. We agreed to meet at Su-San's car after class.

I can't say that psychology was boring. Our teacher gave us a quiz to find out which personality disorder we were most likely to have. (She later said that these were just for fun and were not to be taken seriously.) I was diagnosed with Borderline Personality, and Su-San got Schizoid. She then gave us a paper that told us what exactly it meant, and I was a bit surprised to find that I did have a lot of the characteristics of the disorder I had gotten. After that she put a video on, and let us watch that for the rest of the class period. As she turned the lights out, I looked around at the classroom.

It was an odd setup, with two big chunks of desks. Part of them were in the middle of the class, three rows, going all the way to the back. Then there were about five rows adjacent to those, with only two desks each, one behind the other, which faced the desks in the middle. (A/N: okei, classroom setups are hard to put in words, so I drew floor plans for them, which can be seen here: <http://akitoxagito-wanajima.Deviantart.com/#!/d4f7pzi>) Su-San and I chose these seats, him sitting behind me. I turned a bit in my seat and offered him a smile.

"Hei..." I greeted quietly. He blinked at me a moment, then returned the gesture.

"Hej." I chuckled, then sighed quietly.

"This movie is kinda boring... I don't really know what they're talking about..." I admitted, and he nodded in understanding.

"Ja." He agreed. I leaned back in my chair, so I was looking at him upside-down.

"Are you excited for tonight?" I asked, and he shrugged. "Yeah, that's about how I feel. But Lukas got pretty excited, so it must be fun. Still, I don't know how I feel about singing in front of everyone... I'm pretty tone deaf." I rambled, still trying to keep quiet. He shook his head, making me raise an eyebrow in confusion.

"Not tone deaf." He stated forcefully. My eyes widened, then my lips tugged into a smile.

"Well, thank you, but you don't have to flatter me. I know I suck." I argued, making his frown deepen a bit.

"You don't sound bad. Pre'y." He insisted, and I offered him a small smile.

"Alright, we'll see if you can still say that after tonight." I challenge, and he nodded.

"Boys, please, at least TRY to watch the movie." The teacher snapped, and I jumped.

"S-Sorry." I offered, turning my face to the board and pretending to watch the movie.

After a few minutes, I couldn't help but shift uncomfortably. I never was one for sitting for long periods of time, and my back was beginning to hurt. Actually, truth be told, it has been for a few days now. I think it started when we came back from the beach, but I would have felt bad if I told Su-San that. He'd probably blame himself, and then I would feel bad for making him feel bad... And you get the idea. So I've been keeping it to myself, but it's starting to worry me a bit. I've taken some painkillers for it, but they didn't really help.

I sighed to myself, but luckily the bell rang to cover it. All of the other students shuffled out of the classroom quickly, Leaving Su-San and I to be last out, yet again. As we merged into

the crowd, I couldn't help but notice his close proximity, and my face flushed. Did he always walk this close? It really wasn't as if there were THAT many kids around us... We didn't need to be THAT close... But I can't say that it bothered me...

Ever heard that blondes are dumb and clumsy? I'm sure the blondes out there are currently feeling pretty offended, but I'm pretty much living proof of that statement. Obviously I am simply incapable of multitasking, because, for the few moments it took for me to contemplate Su-San's proximity, I managed to trip. Down I went, face first, closing my eyes in anticipation for the worst.

Somehow, with his super human Su-San powers, he managed to catch my hand and yank me up before I could hit the floor. I stumbled forward a bit, then finally got my footing. After gathering my senses, and making sure that I wouldn't wince at the pain that just flared up in my back, I turned to him and flashed him a thankful smile.

"Thanks Su-San! Good catch. I'm sure that the janitors appreciate not having to clean blood off the floor on the first day." I said humorously, but he just frowned. "W-What's the matter?" I asked, worried now. He stared at me a bit longer, then shook his head.

"Nothin'" He replied simply, and started walking again, pulling me forward by the hand he was still holding. I faltered a bit, then rushed to keep up.

"Um.. Su-San? I'm alright now, so you can..."

"Stairs." He cut me off, and, sure enough, there was a flight of stairs we would have to climb down to get to the parking lot. I sighed, then smiled.

"Okei. Sorry to be so danger prone..." I mumbled, and he shook his head, leading me down the stairs.

"No' yer faul'." He assured me. I chuckled as we made it onto flat ground. Still, he didn't release my hand. But really, who was I to argue? Wasn't this what I wanted in the first place? So that's how we made our way to his car, hand in hand. Mathias, Lukas, and Emil were already there, and I didn't miss the look Lukas gave me after he glanced at our hands. But I chose to ignore it by smiling at Emil.

"I'm taking it that this means you're coming?" I asked, and he nodded.

"Yeah, I called my mom, and she said it was okay. Granted, I didn't tell her who I was going with, but oh well." He replied, shrugging at the end.

"Alright, well, lets make a trip home, drop our stuff off, and grab some cash. Do you need to stop by home too?" I asked, and he shook his head.

"No, I keep my money with me. Seth would take it if I left it at home." He explained, then gave me an apologetic look. "Sorry, Seth is my..."

"I know." I cut him off, not wanting to make him recall bad memories. His eyes widened, then he turned to Lukas, who nodded. Emil then looked at me, and offered me the smallest of smiles.

"Alright, thank you." He said quietly, and I nodded.

"Okei, well, let's go!" I directed, and everyone started piling into the car. Su-San had to let go of my hand to get in, and I gave him a small smile in an attempt to assure him that I wouldn't hurt myself in the time it took to get into his car. Of course, this is me, so I managed to do just that.

"Ouch!" I yelped, rubbing my head where I had just hit it on the top of the car. "Perkele..."

(1) I swore quietly under my breath. I saw Su-San's head snap in my direction when he heard the thump of my head meeting his car, and he was now staring at me with worry evident in his eyes. I winced a bit, but did my best to give him a reassuring smile.

"S-Sorry... I'm such a klutz..." I closed my door, trying to ignore the pain. He stared at me a little longer, then finally started the car, and we were on our way.

..-.-.-.-+.-.-.-.-.

Not much happened between the school and the restaurant. We stopped at my house, and both Su-San and I informed our mothers that we were going out. They gave us enough money to pay for ourselves, as well as Lukas and Mathias. We thanked them, then quickly returned to the car and headed downtown. Mathias was talking something over with Lukas, and Emil would randomly throw something in, but I wasn't really paying attention. I was more focused on Su-San.

He had been acting a bit strange today... And it bothered me that I didn't know why. Had Mathias staying over somehow affect the rest of his day? But surely Su-San wouldn't let something like that bother him. Maybe the early morning fight had thrown him off? Those were the questions I was forcing myself to ask, but they were just desperate attempts at trying to avoid responsibility. I had a sinking sensation in the pit of my stomach that told me that I had done something wrong, and that, whatever that was, it was bothering him. But what could I have done?

Maybe he really was getting tired of spending time with me. We hadn't gone a day without spending several hours together since I had moved here. I mean, everyone needs personal space, right? Should I back off?

Finally, I decided that I was going to put a little distance between us tonight. Definitely. I could sit on the other side of the room. I could! I would sit next to Lukas! Or maybe Emil... But before I could decide, I realised that we had pulled into the parking lot of our destination. My heart sped up a bit as I got out of the car, and I followed the foursome in.

The place wasn't too busy, only a few of the tables taken. A waitress was waiting at the entrance, and smiled at us happily, probably glad to have something to interrupt her boredom. "Hi guys! Is this everyone?" She asked, and we nodded. "Okay, so five. Do you guys want general seating, or a karaoke room?" was her next inquiry.

"Karaoke!" Mathias announced, and she smiled at his eagerness.

"Alright! You guys are lucky, we've got one more open right now! Follow me please!" She instructed, then led us towards the back. There were several doors, and she led us through the one on the very end. I gasped a bit as I entered, surprised to find a huge TV set up on the wall. There was a machine that had two wireless mics sitting on the floor next to the tv, then a table in the center, and a couch pushed against the far wall. I waited as everyone took their seats, then made a point of going around to Emil's other side, the farthest seat from Su-San's. Before I had a chance to gauge his reaction, the waitress set the menus down.

"So, have you guys been here before? Do you know how this works?" She asked, and Mathias nodded.

"Yeah! Just turn the thing on, and we'll take it from there!" He assured her, and she smiled, bending over to set the machine up. After she succeeded, and had turned the TV on, she turned and pulled a pad of paper out of her apron.

"Okay, it's all set up! Do you know what you'd like to drink?"

"Pepsi!" Mathias said immediately.

"I'll take a Ramune." Lukas answered calmly, glaring at Mathias.

"Me too." Emil agreed.

"...Wa'er." Su-San said simply. I guess that makes it my turn...

"Um... Do you have Calpis?" I asked her, and she smiled brightly at me.

"Yes we do! I'm surprised you know what that is!" She exclaimed, and I smiled back.

"Yeah, I used to get it at a restaurant in the town where I used to live. I'll take one of those, please." She nodded enthusiastically, writing it down.

"Alright, I'll be back with your drinks soon, so if you guys want to go ahead and get started feel free." She informed, then bowed and closed the door. Then all eyes were on me in.

"Tino... Dare I ask.... What is Calpis?" Lukas asked, and I smiled sheepishly.

"Um... It's pretty hard to explain... It's kind of a milky drink... but not really... It's kind of... I really couldn't tell you. You can try some if you'd like." I offered, and his face turned to one of worry.

"As curious as I am, I'm a bit... Hesitant to try it, considering what happened last time I tried something you like..." He replied, and I grinned.

As soon as the conversation was over, Mathias was up and going for the mics. Luckily for our eardrums, Lukas put a quick stop to that.

"Sit down and figure out what you're going to order you idiot." He snapped, and Mathias froze, sending a pout over his shoulder.

"Aw, come on Norge! I want to sing now!" He whined, but Lukas sent him a glare, and the Dane sat down quickly. I chuckled, then directed my attention to the menu, not quite sure what to get. I turned to my left to ask Su-San his opinion, and actually got as far as opening my mouth, when I realised that he wasn't sitting there at all. I blushed to myself, and tried to reabsorb myself in the menu. I flipped through a few times, but simply couldn't decide. A lot of it sounded good, but it all sounded either too small or too big. I really wanted to get the sampler plate, but I would never get through all of the food it included. I gave the menu a pout, and sighed, then decided I needed to use the bathroom.

"Hei... I'll be right back. I'm going to the bathroom real fast." I announced, then stood and headed out. No, I didn't really need to use the bathroom, but I needed a few minutes to think things over by myself. So I searched for the bathroom, and, upon finding my destination, entered. No one was inside, to my relief, and I walked up to the sink, turning on the cold water and letting it run over my wrists. I looked up at my reflection, which I found to be flushed. But why? I wasn't embarrassed about anything, at the moment anyway... Was I getting a fever maybe? Ugh, that would suck.

I jumped as the door opened, and I was surprised to find Lukas in the doorway. He gave me a small look of disappointment before making his way over to me.

"What are you doing?" He asked, and I looked down stupidly.

"Washing my hands?" I tried, but he shook his head.

"You know that isn't what I mean. Berwald is so confused right now! And don't think I don't know that you sat that far away on purpose! Now explain to me, what are you doing?" He demanded, and I winced. Thinking it over, I decided I could confide in Lukas, and grabbed some paper towels to dry my hands off.

"I... Su-San has been acting oddly today... I'm afraid that he's getting tired of me, so I thought I would give him some space..." I explained. He stared at me for a moment, as if trying to detect a lie, and, upon finding none, he sighed.

"Tino, you're reading this all wrong. I would tell you what's going on, but you wouldn't believe me anyway. All I can tell you is that you hurt his feelings by sitting away from him. Might I suggest that you switch when you go back in?"

I frowned, and looked up at him, as if asking for assurance, which, honestly, I was.

"A-Are you sure? You don't think he's tired of me?" I asked.

"No Tino, I don't think he is. Now go back before he has a heart attack." He commanded, making shooing motions. I smiled, and headed back, Lukas close behind. As I opened the door, I hesitated, but did as I was told, and claimed the seat to Su-San's right. I saw his head turn my way out of the corner of my eye, but I kept my eyes down. Luckily for me, the waitress came in with our drinks at that moment.

“Sorry about the wait guys... We had to kick some guy out because he kept feeling the other customers up...” She said lowly, and I sighed. That sounded an awful lot like something Francis would do. Throughout the years that I had known him, he had grown to be a real pervert. But no, that didn't matter. I was in a new place! No Francis here!

“Anyway, here are your drinks! Pepsi, Two Ramunes, a water and....Oh! You moved! And a Calpis.” She announced each as she set them down, then she pulled the pad out again.

“Alright, know what you want?” She asked.

“I want the Yakitori plate, and the teriyaki chicken plate, and some tempura shrimp!” Mathias announced, which earned him an elbow in the ribs.

“Pick one you blathering idiot! Don't forget that Tino and Berwald are paying for us.” Lukas spat as Mathias rubbed at his now sore chest.

“Jeeze... Alright! I'll do the teriyaki.” He decided, sounding a bit defeated. Lukas nodded his approval.

“I'll get the Yakitori, and a small order of the tempura shrimp.” He told her, and Mathias' face broke into a grin.

“Aww! I love you so much Norge! You're awesome!” Mathias cried, throwing his arms around his bofriend.

“You assume that I plan to share. But I don't.” Lukas deadpanned. Mathias' smile fell, and he resumed his sulking.

“Such a meanie...”

“I'll take a beef udon bowl, please.” Emil said, shaking his head at Mathias.

“Okay, and how about you two?” She asked, turning to Su-San and I. I blanched as I realised that I had never actually chosen what I was going to eat. I looked at Su-San for the first time since getting out of the car. He met the look, staring at me for a moment.

“We'll share the samp'er pla'e.” He answered, and I couldn't help but smile fondly. How he managed to read my mind, I'll never know. The waitress smiled, nodded, and then excused herself after explaining that it would be a while for the food. After she left, Lukas sighed, waving a limp wrist at Mathias.

“Alright dumbass, you can start.” He informed him, and Mathias brightened up immediately.

“Awesome! I'm going to blow all of your blonde minds!” He announced, and I chuckled as I realised that we all were, indeed, blonde. The shades were different, but still, blonde. While Mathias was claiming a mic, Lukas turned to me.

“It really does take a while for the food. They make the karaoke room food last, because they assume we will be entertained enough by the karaoke that we won't mind. Which we don't, but you get the point. Might as well get comfortable.” He offered, then went to go sit on the floor with his back pressed against the arm of the couch. Emil followed suit, sitting next to his brother. I looked at the poor rejected couch, and felt pity for it. I got up and made my way over, plopping down on it and preparing myself for whatever sound was about to come out of Mathias' mouth.

My heart skipped a beat when I felt Su-San sit down behind me, meaning he had followed me over to the couch. I jumped a bit, but calmed down enough to smile at him. He just stared at me for a moment, then directed his attention to Mathias, who had finally chosen his song. I did the same, but groaned a bit as I realised exactly WHO was about to sing.

“It's just the cutest thing
When you get to fussing (cussing)
Yelling and throwing things
I just wanna eat you up

I don't mean no disrespect
When I start staring
Knowing that it makes you madder (uh, oh)
I'm sorry but seeing you mad is so sexy" (3)

I heard Lukas sigh, and I chuckled a bit. Well, it definitely suited their relationship, I suppose. And, surprisingly enough, Mathias didn't sound too bad when singing. Not good, but not bad. As he finished his song, he handed the mic to his boyfriend, who glared at it. "And what if I say that I don't want to?" He demanded, and Mathias smirked. "Then I'll tell them about that first time we tried out the restr..." Lukas snatched the mic from his hands with a huff, and Mathias grinned proudly. Lukas went through the book of songs, and finally chose one, punched in the numbers, and sighed as the music started.

"I don't like to be alone in the night
And I don't like to hear I'm wrong when I'm right
And I don't like to have the rain on my shoes
But I do love you
But I do love you" (4)

His voice was soothing. I guessed that he had probably been in a choir class at some point, as it sounded practiced and smooth. I relaxed and smiled as the sweet lyrics came out of his mouth. But I shifted uncomfortably moments later, my back not liking the position I had chosen. Maybe I should bring my back pain up with my mother? Maybe I had really hurt myself or something...

I jumped as I felt hands touch my back, swiveling my head around to look at the owner of the hands. Su-San looked back at me, his expression coming off as uncertain.

"Yer back is bother'n ya. Ah can..." He trailed, and I smiled gratefully, though a little bit of shame laced it. I thought I was hiding it well, but obviously not well enough. He had discovered my secret. But, having been discovered, I might as well take him up on the offer.

"Would you? That would be great!" I agreed, and he nodded his head, kneading his hands into the middle of my back gently. Any harder, and it probably would have hurt, but he got the pressure just right, and I melted. Compared to the faked relief that painkillers had given, I was actually feeling the stress disappear from my muscles. He worked slowly, rubbing each spot of pressure out, working his way down to my lower back.

"Ah think ya strained it a li'l." He said quietly, and I frowned a bit.

"Really? But... Isn't that something that only old people do?" I asked, and he shook his head.

"No. Bu' Ah think i's my faul'." He informed me, and I groaned.

"Why would you think that?" I questioned, and I heard a faint sigh.

"Ya've been favorin' i' since we wen' ta the beach. Ah think ah threw ya too har'." He admitted sadly, continuing the ministrations with his hands. I hesitated, trying to think of the answer that he wanted to hear the most.

"Su-San... It's not your fault. It's probably from when I swam so far out." I tried, but I felt him tense a bit. I sighed, then turned my head to face him. "Please, don't blame yourself. It isn't your fault." I assured him, and he searched my eyes for just a moment, then pulled me into a hug.

"Ah'm sorry..." He whispered, and I shook my head.

"But you didn't do anything..." I pointed out.

"Bu'... Bu' yer angry with me..." He retorted. My eyes widened, and I pulled back a bit.

“W-What? No I'm not!” I cried. Where on earth did he get that idea?

“Bu' ya... Ya didn' wan' ta si' with me earlier... And ya...” He mumbled, and I frowned. So my little plan had backfired. Big surprise there.... Not.

“Su-San... I'm sorry. You were acting a bit odd today, so I figured you were wanting some space. That's why I sat there, not because I'm mad at you!” I explained, and his eyes widened a fraction.

“Y-Ya... Ah... Fin... Ah didn' mean...” He sighed, then pulled me close to him again. “Ah didn' mean ta make ya think tha'. Ah was worried 'bou' ya...” He told me, and I looked at his chest, ashamed of myself. So Lukas was right, I really had hurt his feelings...

“Su-San... I...”

“Hey, sorry to interrupt your cuddlefest, but it's your turn...” Mathias cut in. I flushed immediately, pushing away a bit.

“U-Um... Why don't you have Emil go next?” I tried, and Mathias shrugged, handing the mic to the boy on the floor. I sighed in relief, turning back to Su-San.

“I'm sorry.” I whispered, then gave him a quick squeeze before turning back around to face the TV. Again I jumped as I felt hands on me, but instead of going to my back again, they wrapped around my waist and pulled me back, so that I was resting against Su-San's chest. I flushed, but I didn't pull away, as the lyrics started flashing across the screen and Emil started singing.

“I'm just a little bit caught in the middle
Life is a maze and love is a riddle
I don't know where to go, can't do it alone
I've tried and I don't know why” (5)

Chapter End Notes

(1) - Perkele is the equivalent of Fuck in Finnish. (But I think the literal translation is Devil....)

(3) - Denmark's song is When You're Mad by Ne-Yo. This one was suggested by my buddy ToraStar! Thanks so much for the suggestion! And I'm wondering if you have the next challenge in mind? Looking forward to it!

(4) - Norway's song is But I Do Love You by LeAnn Rimes. I chose this one, for lack of a better option. But it seems to suit him, in my opinion. He complains a lot, but deep down he loves his Den. Yeah, moving on.

(5) - Iceland's song is The Show by Lenka. More credit to give! Moth Mask suggested this one!

Thanks for reading, feedback is appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 20

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Su-San was forced to release me when my turn came around, much to my dismay. Emil held the mic out to me, looking as bored as ever. But me? Oh no, I wasn't looking forward to this at all. Like I had told Su-San, I was quite tone deaf. Maybe that's part of the reason I don't get along with Choir kids... I might feel a little... Inferior.

“Um... Can't we skip me? Believe me, you want to.” I hinted, but to no avail. Emil dropped the mic in my lap, and Mathias handed me the book. I sighed, accepting my fate, and stood up. I didn't even bother with the book, as I really didn't care what I had to sing. It wasn't going to be fun regardless of the song. So I punched in some random numbers and took my chances. And hei, I got pretty lucky! I actually knew the song that popped up. But I also knew that this particular song was a little depressing. It was from some old musical about a King and his whore, or something like that... WHAT? I saw it when I was, like, ten! It was a long time ago! Maybe it wasn't a whore... A teacher sounded more familiar... Well, whatever, it was a sad song! And it was starting!

“C-Can not touch

Can not hold

Can not be together

Can not love

Can not kiss

Can not have each other

Must be strong, and we must let go

Can not say what our hearts must know”

Okei, it was definitely a teacher... What was her name? Amanda? Ariel? Um... It was an A... I think...

“How can I not love you

What do I tell my heart

When do I not want you

Here in my arms

How does one waltz away

From all the memories

How do I not miss you

When you are gone”

Anna! That was totally her name! Anna! Anna and the King! Hahaha! Go my fabulously slow memory!

“Can not dream

Can not share

Sweet and tender moments

Can not feel

How we feel

Must pretend it's over

Must be brave, and we must go on

Must not say, what we've known all along”

I took this moment to glance around the room, wanting to gauge the reactions of my... Friends. (I'm still not sure if I want to count Mathias.) I must say that I was relieved that they didn't all have faces of absolute horror, so I guess I wasn't doing too bad. Lukas and Emil still seemed indifferent, but I was starting to realise that that was their default expression. I was kind of wondering if it ran in the family, or if Emil had picked it up out of habit from Lukas. If so, that was utterly cute. Moving on...

Mathias was gesturing wildly, but that too was normal. And he wasn't gesturing at me specifically... Just gesturing in general. I chose to ignore him.

“How can I not love you

What do I tell my heart

When do I not want you

Here in my arms

How does one waltz away

From all the memories

How do I not miss you

When you are gone”

Finally, I looked at Su-San, though I was a bit worried. And with good reason, because I blushed as soon as I saw him watching me. I mean, generally people stare at you when you do karaoke... But this is Su-San, and therefore it's different. Why? Because I said. I was relieved that the song had ended, because I had started trembling a bit, hopefully not visibly. It's bad enough that I look like a girl... I don't want them to see how much I act like one too! And what a girly thing to think! Why am I... Forget it... I'm just going to let this train of thought fly away! Away from my mind! Shoo!

And now I was even more flushed thanks to my stupid thoughts. I shuffled back to the couch quickly, as though the speed would somehow spare me the comments the I was sure to get in a few seconds. I mean, the general rule of karaoke is that you watch the person sing, snicker amongst yourselves while they sing, then insult them so that they refuse to sing the next time you go karaokeing (yes, that is totally a word), then somehow sucker them into it anyway. If you don't know that, then clearly you've never been on a karaoke outing. Well, now you know how to do it!

As I plopped down, I tried to curl into myself, not really wanting to be seen at all, and therefore doing my best to be as small as possible. I felt fingers prying at my arms gently, and knew it couldn't be anyone other than Su-San. I peeked out through the small gap that he had managed to create, and blushed as I made eye contact. He was staring at me so intensely....

Oh wait, that's normal...

“Qui' hidin'. Ya sounded fine.” He assured me, but I shook my head and hid myself in my arms yet again. When a situation gets too embarrassing, the answer is, clearly, curl into a ball and pretend you don't exist. I heard a sigh, and I assumed he had given up. I smirked rather triumphantly, not used to winning these kinds of arguments. I guess that should have made me suspicious, but, alas, my mind doesn't process common sense that fast. So, by the time I figured out that something was amiss, the fingers had already found my sides.

To say that I'm ticklish is an understatement. If I am standing, and you so much as make tickle fingers in my general direction, I will FALL to the floor, giggling madly. Yeah...

Inconvenient on my part. Believe me. And how, in our ten years of knowing each other, would it even remotely be possible that Su-San wouldn't know that about me? Exactly.

So, as you can probably guess, I spazzed erratically and fell to the floor, laughing the whole way there. And my torture didn't end there. Oh no, far from it. He followed me, finding my sides again, and attacked relentlessly. I flailed, gasping in air as often as I could in between

my peals of laughter, incoherently begging for mercy. Well, if my tone deaf singing didn't have them staring, this definitely would.

“Su-Su-San! Ah! That-That's... Not... FAIR!” I cried, trying to escape by crawling away. No such luck. He was moving much faster than me, as he wasn't hindered by unyielding laughter and writhing. I couldn't even tickle him back, because, of course, he wasn't ticklish. “P-Please stop! Oh my g-Aah!” I pleaded, and finally he halted. I tensed, breathing heavily, looking at him curiously. Was it over? Was I safe? He gave me a hard stare, and I winced a bit under the gaze.

“Are ya done bein' emo?” He questioned, and my eyes widened. I had pretty much forgotten about my whole five minutes of tone deaf singing until he had reminded me. I nodded quickly, as he seemed to be poising himself for another round if I didn't. He nodded shortly, standing up and offering me a hand up. I accepted, allowing him to pull me to my feet.

“You know, somehow it doesn't surprise me that you're ticklish.” Mathias commented, handing the mic to Su-San. I blushed, finally remembering that there were, indeed, three others in the room. I then proceeded to pout.

“What's that supposed to mean?” I demanded, and he shrugged.

“I dunno... You just seemed the type. Anyway, it's Waldy's turn!” He exclaimed, and I turned doubtfully to Su-San. I doubted he would sing, though I was secretly hoping he would. It was pretty rare to hear Su-San sing, so it was always a treat when he did. I watched him give the mic a scornful look, then he glared up at Mathias.

“Yer gonna make me do 't even if Ah say no?” He asked, and Mathias nodded, wolfish grin still in place. Su-San sighed, standing up. I'm sure I was gaping like a fish at that point. He was really going to do it! He punched in some random numbers, just as I had done, and began his song.

“You come to me with scars on your wrist
You tell me this will be the last night feeling like this
I just came to say goodbye
I didn't want you to see me cry, I'm fine
But I know it's a lie.”

His accent was less noticeable while he sang, but it was still so obviously HIM. His super deep voice would give him away no matter what he was doing. Still, it was the fluid kind of deep, the type that sent chills down your spine with its utter sexiness... I must sound pretty weird now, huh? But I'm sure you can all think of someone with that kind of voice.

“This is the last night you'll spend alone
Look me in the eyes so I know you know
I'm everywhere you want me to be.
The last night you'll spend alone,
I'll wrap you in my arms and I won't let go,
I'm everything you need me to be.
Your parents say everything is your fault
But they don't know you like I know you they don't know you at all
I'm so sick of when they say
It's just a phase, you'll be okej. you're fine
But I know it's a lie.
The last night away from me”

I sighed, wishing his sweetly sung words were meant for me. While I was enjoying this rare display of singing, I was feeling kind of down. What would I give to have him love me as much as the person this song was directed at, or rather, the lack thereof? (Unless he was

thinking of someone... I don't even want to think about that.)

“The night is so long when everything's wrong
If you give me your hand I will help you hold on
Tonight,
Tonight.

I won't let you say goodbye,
I'll be your reason why.
The last night away from me,
Away from me.”

He finished, laying the mic down awkwardly, and shuffling back over to me. I saw Mathias give him a thumbs up, which was promptly ignored, much to Mathias' fake disappointment. He took the mic off the table, and picked himself another song.

“Hej.” He greeted lowly.

“Hei.” I chuckled, giving him a goofy grin. “That was good.” I informed him.

“Le's no' talk about it. No more singin' fer a while.” He decided, and I sent him a little pout.

“Oh, so you can encourage me, but I can't encourage you? Very mature Su-San.” I accused sarcastically.

“Ex'cly.” He concluded, and I sighed obnoxiously. I would have continued the mini argument, but our food arrived at that moment, and we all crowded around the table to eat it. She laid a small pile of chopsticks at the head of the table, then excused herself. I grabbed myself a pair, proud that I actually knew how to use them. Lukas, Emil, and Mathias took them too, but Su-San stuck to his fork. I gave him a small smile, pulling mine out of the package and separating them with a quick snap. We both went at it, picking up whatever looked good. It was a sampler platter after all, so there was a lot to sample. I looked up to see how the others were faring. As I could have guessed, Lukas and Emil ate slowly. Lukas was still nibbling at his second shrimp, and Emil hadn't even gotten to his actual Udon, still picking at the same small salad that had come with it. Mathias, on the other hand, was halfway through his dinner, though he kept dropping it. I guessed he had just picked the chopsticks up to show off. He'd probably switch back to a fork soon. I smiled, glad that our night had finally gotten around to being fun. I was worried about coming to this place, but I think we made a pretty good choice in our last desperate attempt at preserving our summer fun.

-.-.-+.-.-.-

Mathias sung some more after dinner, then we dropped Emil off and headed home. We were all in good spirits as we traveled, the night having cheered us up. As we pulled into his driveway, I gave Su-San a quick glance, which he was even quicker to return. I blushed at having been caught, and smiled awkwardly in an attempt to make it look a little less like I was staring at him. He gave me a twitch of the lips, which was his equivalent of a smile.

“I guess that's it for tonight then! Goodnight!” I said as I got out of the car. Lukas nodded, shuffling over to Mathias to give him the lover's goodnight ritual. (For those curious souls, this includes a hug, a kiss, more hugging, more kissing, lots of I love yous and goodnights, more kissing, etc.)

I looked away awkwardly, smiling up at Su-San as a distraction.

“I had fun tonight! How about you?” I asked, and he nodded.

“Had fun too.” He replied simply, not looking at me. I guessed he was watching Lukas and Mathias, as he was looking in that general direction, but I was a little surprised at it. Su-San had never really been one to like romance. He didn't watch romantic movies, and if I forced him to, he turned away when they did the super romantic stuff... So why was he watching

them? Wasn't it even more awkward, considering he knew them? But... I don't know, I guess it was sweet when they acted like that...

"I'm glad. Are we all riding with you again, or should we catch the bus?" I asked, and he gave me the look. The Su-San look. I've told you about it before, haven't I? No? Oh... Well, most people would mistake it for his default face if they weren't paying attention, but if you really take the stare in, you can feel the... Disbelief. Its a look that says "are you seriously stupid enough that you just asked me that? Can you honestly tell me that you deserve to exist in the same space as me when you posses such a small amount of intelligence?" Yeah, most people have one of those, but his is the worst.

"O-Okei, well, I guess I'll see you in the morning... I'll bring my lunch box..." I trailed, turning away dejectedly. I looked to see that Lukas and Mathias were still attached, luckily for me it wasn't orally. I sighed, turning back around, just in time to gasp as arm wrapped around me. I hesitated for a moment, gathering my mind which had just exploded, then giggled.

"Um... Hei Su-San!"

"Hej." He replied, not letting me go. I chuckled.

"Is this how all of our exchanges are going to go from now on? If so, the conversation might get terribly repetitive..." I informed him sarcastically, looking up so I could see the little twitch I was sure I was going to get... Wait for it... There!

"Ah'll have ta work on mah conversation skills then." He announced, and I smiled, hugging him back.

"No, that's alright. I think this suits us." I decided, and he grunted his agreement.

"Well... I thought you were waiting on us... But apparently not." Lukas cut in, and I made a very manly "meep" sound. How can a meep be manly? Because all sounds I make are manly, of course! ...Oh shut up... Fine, maybe it wasn't very manly... But it definitely WASN'T girly. Nope, not at all.

"Ahaha, hei Lukas! Ready to go?" I asked, feeling my cheeks heat, and hoping that the lack of sun was masking my blush.

"Yes, I am, but I don't know that I can say the same about you..." He replied, gesturing in my direction. Su-San and I both let go of each other, stepping towards our respective houses.

"Ready to go!" I assured him, then turned around to grin at Su-San and Mathias. "Night! See you in the morning!" I called.

"Nigh'." Su-San called back, and Mathias gave an obnoxious wave. I turned back around and lead Lukas to my house. Once we were inside taking our shoes off, he pounced on me.

"How can you say that he doesn't like you back?" He demanded, and I gaped at him, dropping my shoes near the door.

"W-What?" I asked, not sure where the question had come from.

"Shit Tino, I tried to keep my mouth shut, but even I have my limit! Come on now, quit playing dumb." He commanded, and I furrowed my brows, utter confusion taking over.

"Playing dumb? What are you talking about?" I asked, and he groaned. I had never seen him so... Emotional about anything before, except for that fight at school.

"Tino... I don't know what kind of experience you have, but what you and Berwald do... It really isn't normal for JUST friends. Like, if I didn't know better, I would think you two were dating. That waitress thought that you were." He informed me, and my eyes widened.

"R-Really? How could you tell?"

"First off, she didn't bring you an extra plate. She assumed you wouldn't mind eating off of the same plate. And when she asked if you wanted dessert, she asked if the TWO of you wanted dessert, which means she knew you would be sharing." He listed, leading me up the

stairs to my room. Luckily my mom had gone out somewhere, so she didn't hear him and I talking about this.

"But... You don't know that she thought that! Friends can share food!" I exclaimed.

"But they don't. Tino, friends hardly, if ever, share food. And, in those INCREDIBLY rare moments when they do, they have separate plates, and they halve the food. They don't feed each other either." He pointed out, and I blushed at the memory of Su-San spoon feeding me tempura style ice-cream. In my defense, I had dropped my spoon on the floor. "Nor do they give each other back rubs. They don't tickle them, and they definitely don't hug them goodnight for a good minute and a half."

"But..."

"They don't make each other lunches, they don't hold hands." He continued.

"H-Holding hands? When did we..."

"Today, after school, as you were walking to the car." He reminded, and I shook my head.

"No! He was just making sure I wouldn't fall again! I fall down a lot!" I cried, but he shook his head.

"Even if that WAS the case, which it wasn't, friends don't do THAT either."

"Lukas, I..."

"They don't let each other sit in their laps during P.E."

"But..."

"Tino, you are trying too hard to make this difficult for yourself." He announced, plopping down on his little mound of blankets on the floor. I followed suit, sitting across from him.

"But I... I just don't think..." I tried, but he cut me off yet again.

"I know. You've been telling yourself, for years, that there is no way, ever, in entire span of the universe, that he would ever like you back. But Tino, if you don't open your eyes, you are never going to get anywhere. I don't know what I can say to make you see how much of a chance you have, but you need to get it through that thick, thick blonde skull of yours; He likes you back!" He finished, and I paused, taking his whole speech in, then sighed.

"Lukas... I... You don't know how much I want to believe you... But I... There's just no way..." I trailed quietly, and he sighed in frustration.

"Tino, it's fine if you don't believe me, but I want you to promise me that you'll pay attention. When he does ANYTHING that you think could be considered flirting, think of what I said. Promise me." He demanded, and I gave, nodding my head.

"Okei. I promise." I agreed, then stood up. "And I hope we're done talking, cause it's late." I informed him, and he glanced at my clock.

"Yes, that's all. For now..." He conceded. I gave him a small smile, tossing him a shirt and some pants to sleep in, pulling out some for myself. "Thank you."

"You're welcome."

Chapter End Notes

I hit 20 chapters! Isn't that crazy? This is the biggest fic I've ever written! (By far...)
Thanks for reading, and feedback is always appreciated!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 21

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

How did I find myself HERE of all places? Sure, I had been pretty willing at first... Well, alright, I had actually insisted on it. But now... Sitting in this chair, having the plump little old woman clean my ears off in preparation for the things to come... I kind of wanted to back out. I don't even remember how Lukas talked me into this in the first place... Hmm... I guess this situation calls for a flashback:

"Whoa! Lukas! You have your ears pierced?" I exclaimed, having just noticed the glint of the small silver hoops in the other male's ears. He looked at me a moment, as though confused, then nodded.

"Oh, yes. I have for a few years. Ever since Mathias and I started dating. He's the one who convinced me to do it." He explained, pinching the ring between his fingers then releasing it. I stared, a little enviously. I didn't have any piercings...

"Did it hurt?" I asked, and he thought about it.

"No, not really... I guess it stung for a second, but it's really quick. And it's not unbearable or anything." He replied, shrugging. I nodded, thinking it over.

"Could I... Could I get mine done?" I asked, and he gave me the smallest of scoffs.

"No Tino. You, and only you, are forbidden from EVER getting your ears pierced." He spat sarcastically. I frowned, stuck my tongue out, then pouted a bit.

"You don't have to talk to me like I'm stupid! I don't know how these things work!" I defended, and he smiled at me, sitting down next to me on my bed.

"Well, you go in, give the lady some money, and she shoots a little needle through your ear. Or I guess it could be a he... But that's pretty rare, I've noticed..." He trailed off, and I groaned.

"So off topic!" I pointed out, and he shrugged.

"Well, that's all I can really tell you. You either get them done or you don't." He stated matter-of-factly. Then we headed over to Su-San's for our morning trip to school.

I had contemplated it for two days afterward, and decided to go ahead and go through with it. So I guess that's how I find myself here, sitting in a little beauty store after school, on the verge of tears. My mother was talking to a lady at the counter of the store, only having come to assure the employees that I was allowed to pierce my ears. Lukas and Mathias were walking around, window-shopping as they waited. So that left only Su-San to witness this momentous occasion. The lady was readying the gun, and I felt like I was about to faint.

I didn't want to do it anymore. I was going to throw up, going to cry, going to pass out. Any and all of those things, or a combination of them, would be so completely humiliating! I couldn't do it! I needed to tell her to stop.

But then there was Su-San, and he folded his hand over mine, giving it a tight squeeze. I looked up at him, his face straight, unwavering. I stared for a moment, regaining my confidence, and squeezed back. I offered him a little nod, and the lady finally came over with the now prepared gun.

"Ready?" She asked, and, taking a deep breath, I nodded. So she got into position, lining the ring up with my ear, counted down, and I heard a little click, and felt a little prick to go with it.

I opened my eyes, not having known that I closed them, and looked around. Was it over? But... That hadn't hurt nearly as much as it should have! Had she missed? But she was already going around to the other side, and I heard yet another click, felt a little sting, and, just like that, I had my ears pierced. I looked at my new earrings in the mirror, that she offered me, then gave Su-San a big grin. I had done it!

"Su-San! Look! My ears are pierced!" I exclaimed, and he nodded, looking at the little studs that would be in my ears for the next six to eight weeks. I blushed as I realised how childish my excitement was, standing up and thanking the lady. My mother handed me my bag of ear-care supplies, we collected Lukas and Mathias, and we were back on the road, heading for home. (There was a brief argument over who went in whose car, as Mathias decided he wanted to ride with Lukas this time. Eventually we decided that all those underage would ride with Su-San. My mother apparently had "things to do.")

The ride was relatively quiet. Well... As quiet as a car with Mathias in it can be... Which isn't very quiet at all... Well, regardless, I've learned the special technique of blocking out most of what he says, so it seemed pretty quiet.

"...They loo' nice." Su-San mumbled so only I could hear. My eyes widened, and I looked up at him quickly. Once my mind had time to process the compliment, I felt my cheeks heat.

Why, why, why, was I so, so, SO obvious?

"O-Oh... Thank you!" I exclaimed, not sure why it had come out so loud...

"Do they hur'?" He asked, and I shook my head quickly.

"No, not at all! I mean, I guess they ache a little, but not bad enough for me to really notice...

I guess if I touched them they might hurt, but otherwise I'm fine. And, besides, the lady said that some pain and swelling the first day was to be expected, so its nothing to worry about, I'm sure... So yeah, all good here!" I gushed, not realising that I was babbling until I had finished. I flushed further, snapping my head to look out the window in a bid to hide my blush. Why did I always do that? Just talk and talk and talk until people couldn't stand me?

"Tell me if i' hur's too much." He commanded, and I nodded silently, wanting to keep my mouth shut. I could feel his eyes on me, but I knew that he would eventually have to turn back to the road, or risk killing us all. As I predicted, his focus shifted to the road. I sighed, relieved to have avoided any questions, but a bit sad that he hadn't bothered to ask me any. We drove in silence for a bit, and I suddenly realised that it truly WAS silent. Not even Mathias was talking. Ever the curious one, I turned around to glance at the couple in the backseat. I found them staring right back at me, which made me jump.

"Ah! W-What? Why are you two staring?" I demanded, doing my best to glare.

"...Observing your awkwardness." Lukas explained, as if it wasn't a totally cryptic answer at all.

"W-What? What are you talking about?"

"...Just the fact that you are completely refusing to look at Berwald." He pointed out. The blush that I had finally gotten rid of returned with a vengeance, and I shook my head violently.

"I'm not refusing to look at him! What do you want me to do? Stare at him all day?" I questioned, and Lukas gave me a little glare.

"Nevermind, Tino. Sorry to have interrupted. Why don't you go back to sulking like a bitch?" He spat, and my eyes widened. Lukas had never insulted me... I was surprised to say the least.

"Hej! Don' talk ta Tino like tha'!" Su-San cut in, and I looked at him with surprise. He didn't usually interject into conversations, but I guess his protective instincts had kicked in.

"Don't yell at my Norge like that!" Mathias shouted, wrapping an arm around his boyfriend

protectively. Great, just fucking GREAT. Now everyone was pissed off at each other, and it was all thanks to me... How did I accomplish that again? Lukas sighed, making a point of removing Mathias' arm.

"Mathias, I can take care of myself. Shut the fuck up. And... Sorry Tino... I didn't mean to say that... I won't take it back or anything, because you ARE sulking like a bitch, but I'll apologize for saying it out loud." Lukas said, shrugging, and I did my best to smile. Sure, he had hurt my feelings, but I would rather not let this start a fight.

"Um, okei..." I offered, turning back around to face the windshield.

Well, wasn't this day just turning out to be great? I was feeling depressed because I'm an attention whore, Lukas is pissed at me, Su-San is pissed at Lukas, and Mathias is pissed at Su-San. And it's barely noon. Su-San pulled up to his house, and we all exited his car, straggling awkwardly. Should we go to our respective houses, or hang out with one another, or separate completely? I finally looked to Su-San, hoping he could give me an answer. He glanced my way as I looked up, and our eyes met, and suddenly, all the previous awkwardness disappeared. I guess this is why we never got into arguments. With just one look everything that might have been bothering us cleared up, and we were perfectly happy in the company of one another yet again. I couldn't help but smile a bit in relief, going to stand with Su-San. I stood on my tiptoes in an attempt to get to his ear, but he had to bend down a bit for me to actually succeed. I whispered lowly, making a request. He seemed to contemplate it, then nodded. I grinned, going back to the car. I noticed that Lukas gave me a curious look, and I turned to him quickly.

"We decided to give you two some alone time... See you later." I kept it short and sweet, closing my door as Su-San started the engine. Lukas looked surprised on the other side of the window, and I saw his mouth moving, though I didn't hear the words he spoke. I waved to him cheerfully, his face one of shock as we pulled away.

...+...

I tried to question Tino, but either he couldn't hear me, or was pretending like he couldn't. Regardless, he and Berwald pulled out of the driveway, leaving me alone with my stupid bundle of useless Danish blonde. I thought that Tino and I were having an argument of sorts... I had kind of called him a sulky bitch... In retrospect, that was pretty mean of me... I should really apologize later...

Off topic. Our little argument aside, weren't he and Berwald being awkward just moments ago? How did they make up so fast? And how had I missed it? I mean, they weren't fighting, but I could tell that Tino was fretting over something. He probably realised that he had been ranting, and figured that it had bothered Berwald. That seems like something he would fret about...

I guess he just can't get it through that thick blonde skull of his that Berwald loves him. Everyone and their mom's dog can tell, even Mathias, and THAT is saying something. He thinks that he bothers him with the things he does, when they only make Berwald love him more. But, fuck, they are both so AWKWARD! What I wouldn't give to just shove their heads together and force them to kiss. It seems like that would just make them more awkward, but, hell, at the rate they're going at, they'll both be in their nineties before they even get to kissing. You assume I exaggerate, but, I promise you, this is no exaggeration.

I understand where both is coming from, they both find faults with themselves. Tino thinks he is terribly unattractive, fat, too feminine, etc. He is under the immutable impression that Berwald finds him absolutely repulsive. He also seems to think that Berwald is straight,

which, I assure you, is quite far from the truth. He is comparable to a circle. How is a circle comparable to a straight line? Exactly. As for Berwald, I think he caught on that Tino is gay, which, honestly, I would have punched him if he hadn't. That boy is so freaking obvious, it puts Mathias and I to shame. However, despite knowing of Tino's sexuality, Berwald thinks of himself as perpetually friendzoned. And, that aside, he doesn't feel worthy of Tino's affections.

Why I associate with these flaming, sexually frustrated, awkward homosexuals, I will never know. However, I can't say that I wouldn't have befriended them, even if our circumstances were different. Tino and I just... What is the word... Clicked? Yes, I think so. We clicked. As soon as I met him, I was comfortable with him. I knew as soon as I laid eyes on him that I could trust him. I usually tell my stupid intuition to shut the fuck up when it comes to first impressions, but I went with it this time. He's too innocent to worry me.

As I contemplated this, Mathias had decided to drag me into Berwald's house. His reasons I did not know, but I suppose it would be better to go inside than to wait for the awkward couple to return. And yes, I just decided that they are a couple, though they don't know it themselves. They fit all the requirements of an early couple, after all. They go places together, hold hands, share food, hug, sleep together, cuddle, feed each other, and Tino sits in Berwald's lap. Throw a kiss in there and you have the real deal.

Berwald's mother wasn't in the house when we entered, so I assumed she was at work. I followed behind Mathias, who took me up the stairs, into what was clearly Berwald's room. I glanced around curiously, not having been in this room yet. Not surprisingly, it was spartan, clean and sparsely decorated, only the pile of blankets that lay on the floor, obviously Mathias', seemed out of place. Only necessary furniture, and little to nothing in the way of garnishment. In fact, the only décor I could spot was a silver photo frame. Curious, I went to look at the photo inside. I can't say I was surprised that the contents was a picture of a much younger Tino. I couldn't hold back the smallest of smiles as I took in his former appearance. He was a bit chubbier, especially in the face, but he wasn't a fat child. His hair was just a little longer, and pulled up into two lopsided pigtails. It was obvious that he was at the beach, as sand was apparent on his face and in his hair, but he was still grinning like a fool. I placed it back where I had found it, then turned back to Mathias.

"Any particular reason you brought me up here?" I asked, and he only offered me a grin. Well, I guess that was all I needed. I knew from experience what that grin meant. "I don't believe Berwald would be very pleased to return to a room that smells like sex." I pointed out, and his grin grew even wider.

"There's air freshener in the hallway closet. Bed." He commanded, pointing to his makeshift 'bed' on the floor. Well, hell, who was I to argue? In fact, thinking back on it, perhaps this is what Tino had intended to happen. He must have assumed that I get testier when I'm frustrated. Okay, well... Maybe he's right. I did snap at him after all.

I sighed, sitting myself down on his pile of blankets that will, for the sake of my pride, be referred to as his bed from this point on. I refuse to acknowledge that I had sex on a pile of blankets in my new friend/boyfriend's caretaker's house. Yeah, no, that isn't going to fly. Needless to say, Mathias didn't take his time with pouncing on me. I swear I was only half-way through blinking and was already missing my shirt and pants. Not many people know of the magical clothing removing powers that Mathias possesses, but they are powerful. I blinked once more, and I was completely naked, and he was down to boxers. And no, I do not blink slowly, thank you. I couldn't help but watch as he removed his last article of clothing, unashamed of my attraction to his lower half. Say what you like about my boneheaded dimwit of a boyfriend, but it is all trumped by his performance in bed. As much as I still hate

to admit it, he's far from lacking in the size department, if you know what I mean. (Which I hope you do, otherwise I may have to pass you on to Mathias so that you may have a comprehensible conversation with someone.)

The next thing I know, I've been pushed down to lay on my back, Mathias leaning over me, trailing kisses down my chest. I shivered a bit under the fluttering touch of his lips, then jolted as he took a nipple into his mouth. Oh, how this man knew how to please me, to tease me perfectly, just enough to put me on the brink, but not enough to send me over. I groaned, already desperate for more, only my pride keeping me from begging.

"Un... Mathias, we don't... Don't have time for foreplay! Get on with-AH!" I choked on the last syllable, a result of a sharp bite to the nipple he had been licking gently just moments before. He continued his ministrations, despite my urges for him to hurry, pressing fingers to my lips. I allowed them in, used to this routine, sucking on them lightly, making sure to coat them appropriately. He pulled them out, and finally released my poor abused nipple, sitting up and on his haunches. Though my legs were already spread to accommodate his body between them, he pushed so that I was forced to open them even more. I snarled as he did so, my pride still in tact, though it was waning. He returned the gesture with a grin, then shoved a slick finger inside. I gasped, not expecting the intrusion so soon or so fast. I guess I had forgotten how mean Mathias can get if you try to disobey him during sex. He didn't like having his dominance undermined. Actually... That's inaccurate. He likes having it undermined, but only so that he could reassert it. Two fold.

I squirmed a bit as he started moving it, experienced enough that it wasn't painful, but not experienced enough that it wasn't uncomfortable. He waited till I had relaxed a bit, then inserted a second one, scissoring it with the previous finger. I groaned, shifting so that the angle was better for me. As he slid the third in, he took my length into his mouth, sucking gently, distracting me from the pain that was finally starting to form. I focused my attention on the wonderful feelings his tongue was giving me, relaxed my body the best I could.

"Just one more babe," he assured me, returning to his sucking immediately after.

"Oh, no, why not stick your whole-Ah-fist in while you're at it?" I questioned sarcastically, and I felt the curve of his lips around me. He inserted his fourth finger, and I bit my lip to keep from crying out like I knew he wanted me to. No, I wasn't going to let him have that satisfaction. I kept quiet, allowing the pain and pleasure to slowly melt into one feeling. After a few moments, he retracted his fingers, and I couldn't suppress the groan of disappointment I emitted at the loss of the sensation. But it was quickly reintroduced, though it was several times more painful than the fingers.

He didn't hesitate to push his length all the way in, to the hilt. The cry I had been stifling ripped out of my throat, my back arching involuntarily.

"What the FUCK?" I demanded, wincing as he pulled back to thrust. He just offered me a grin.

"No time for foreplay, Norge." He replied, and I had nothing to retaliate with, considering those had been my own words. I bit my lip, and readjusted so that it hurt less, and allowed him free reign of my body. A dominance struggle, I decided, was not worth it at the moment. My pride be damned, I wanted to get laid, just as much as Mathias wanted to fuck me into oblivion.

I was thankful for the slow pace he set, at least initially, but, as time went on, I realised that he was once again teasing me, refusing to speed up. I growled, going as far as to bare my teeth, and tried to urge him to go faster by grinding my hips up to meet him, but he retaliated by pushing my hips down, restricting all of my movement. I snarled as viciously as a hot and bothered Norwegian can, and dug my nails into the arms that were holding me down. I heard

Mathias yelp above me, and he released his hold on me.

“Fuck me the right way, or not at all you stupid mother fucking son of a bitch.” I commanded, receiving a smirk as a reply. He reestablished his grip on my hips, but this time used them for leverage, propelling his hips forward quickly. I gasped, the sensation arching my back. That was definitely better.

“Harder! God fucking damnit harder! And you should know damn well where you're aiming by noAH!” I finally saw white as he hit the sweetest spot in my body. My pride shattered along with my coherency, I cried out with each thrust, my hands grabbing at anything, everything they could find, finally tangling into his hair. We both lost our senses, succumbing fully to the pleasure, our primal instincts taking over. Ecstasy intertwined with my voice as I gave in, screaming anything that came to my mind, mostly semi-coherent utterances of Mathias' name.

It seemed like ages, moments, hours, seconds passed, all at once, too fast yet too slow. I moaned out in pleasure, but also with annoyance, desperation and anticipation. I wanted to release the heat that had been pooling in my stomach, it was burning me from the inside out. But at the same time, I wanted this pleasure to continue endlessly. But I didn't really get to make that decision, as, with a final thrust of his hips, Mathias and I both came simultaneously. We practically screamed, both of our voices rising into a strangled cry as we came, then we both collapsed into a sweaty pile on the floor, gasping in a bid to regain a normal amount of oxygen. It took us quite a while to slow back down to normal breathing, but Mathias was grinning stupidly at me as soon as he did.

“As good as always, babe.” He commented, and I threw him a glare.

“Oh? No, 'that was wonderful' or 'you get better everytime we do this' or...” He didn't let me continue, putting his lips over mine and successfully silencing me.

“Come on Norge, you already know all those things.” He assured me, and I couldn't help but smirk.

“Yeah yeah. We need to clean up. Who knows how long Tino and Berwald are going to be... Wherever they are...”

Chapter End Notes

Short and Smutty?

I'd like to thank those who are still sticking with me... I've never had a fic this long... Ever... I've hit over 20 chapters! Holy Moomins! And it's strange for me to think that, just 20 chapters ago, I was a newbie to SuFin, just making my break, hoping I would maybe get up to thirty reviews. (That's the highest count for any of my other stories!) But this hit the ground running, and I've had some of you guys from day one, so I'd seriously like to thank you!

Alright, the Author's note ends! Goodnight all, hope you have a nice Morning/Afternoon/Evening! Moi Moi!

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 22

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

As we drove, Su-San and I made a silent agreement not to talk about what we both knew Mathias and Lukas were doing. Really, it didn't need discussing. I just hoped they had elected to do... "It" in Su-San's room instead of mine... I know that sounds heartless, but, come on! Who wants to have their friends' after-sex smell in their room for a week? Unless you have some weird fetish, I doubt anyone said "me!"

"Sorry." I jumped at the word, directing my attention to Su-San. I must have been the picture of confusion, as that's what I was feeling.

"What for?" I asked, and he spared me a glance before returning his eyes to the road.

"Ah made ya uncomferble earlier." He replied. I thought about it, and quickly shook my head.

"No, you didn't. I... I was just being hypersensitive. Sorry for talking so much... About nothing." I offered, and he, too, shook his head.

"No' nothing. Ah like to hear ya talk." He informed me, and I blushed.

"T-Thanks... I'd say the same to you, but it wouldn't be much of a compliment, considering you hardly ever talk..." I trailed, and I saw a little twitch of the lips. Points for me! "Anyway, where are we going? I know I said we should give them time alone, but I have no idea where to go to kill time!" I admitted.

"Goin' to the par'." He announced.

"The park?"

"Ja."

"Oh, okei! That could be fun!"

"Gla' ya think so. We're here." He said, and, looking through the windshield, I found this to be true.

It was just one of those average parks, the kind you see in movies... Or I guess just driving down your street. Some paths to walk along, bike trails, a little playground with swings and slides, and children to play on them, people walking dogs, etc. I smiled, glad that parks were parks, regardless of where you went. I got out of the car, closely followed by Su-San, and we quickly agreed to take a walk.

It was such a lovely walk too! Sure, two teenage boys taking a leisurely stroll through a park got us some stares, but when had we ever cared what other people thought? For the majority of it, people just ignored us. I will admit, Su-San had to put the fear of the Moomins into one little group of junior high school boys who dared call us fags, but that's something best forgotten. (It's not like he hit them or anything... A glare was enough to send them running.) But, as I contemplated this, I realised that this was one of those things that Lukas had told me to pay attention to. Was it really that abnormal for two high school boys to take a walk together? I guess it would. So I guess that DID make us a bit weird... But really, did this qualify as romantic? It's not like we were holding hands or anything!

After we had gone pretty much all the way around the park, we decided to sit down for a little rest. We weren't particularly tired, but why not? It was a nice day, might as well relax. We sat down under a big tree, using its trunk as a backrest, and looked out at a small lake that was opposite us. I think we both got that calming "everything is going to be fine" vibe off the

lake, relaxing enough to lean on each other for some extra comfort. I smiled up at him, then returned to looking at the lake. I watched as some kids played near the shore, splashing each other, usually to the disapproving yell of their mothers who didn't want to drive soaking wet kids home. After a few minutes of this people watching, I noticed something a little out of the ordinary.

Near our side of the lake, a little white ball was chasing a balloon. I couldn't tell what it was exactly... Maybe a cat, or a bunny? But, upon further inspection, I found it to be a dog. Curious, I watched as it followed the balloon, which had apparently lost a lot of it's helium, as it was floating low enough to the ground that the dog could TECHNICALLY catch it... But the wind was blowing it much too fast for the pudgy little thing to catch. I kind of felt bad, knowing the little dog would probably never catch it, but there wasn't much I could do. Or so I thought. Until the direction of the wind changed. Which changed the course of the balloon. Into my face. Yeah. Next thing I know, there is a dog trying to use my face as a stepping stone to a balloon that somehow managed to get far enough off the ground to avoid the little dog's mouth. I won't say that I didn't freak out a little... Okei, so I might have screamed in surprise. It's a maybe though, no one can be sure... Anyway, sensing my distress, Su-San removed the dog from my face, holding it away as it squirmed frantically.

"Fin? Are ya okej?" He asked, leaning over to see if my face had been damaged. I put a hand to my heart and took a few deep breaths before answering.

"Y-Yes, that just startled me. Sorry." I reassured him, and he seemed to relax, forcing me to realise that he had tensed. Now that he knew I was safe, he took a look at the wiggling pup in his hands. It really was quite cute, now that it wasn't on my face.

"It's a girl." He informed me, handing her over to me. I smiled as I accepted the little white bundle, lowering her to my lap and petting her in a bid to clam her down a bit. It clearly worked, as she stopped trying to escape and laid down in my lap. I scratched her behind the ears for a moment, and the next thing I knew, she was napping. I chuckled, deciding to let her get some rest before I got up.

"I wonder where she came from... Maybe she accidentally got away from her owner? But I don't see a collar, and she's filthy. I doubt a dog could get THIS dirty that fast... So... A stray?" I contemplated, and Su-San shrugged, giving her head a soft little pat.

"Maybe we shoul' ask aroun'?" He suggested, and I nodded, grabbing her around her middle and hoisting her into my arms. She made a little sound of disapproval, but curled back up in my arms.

So, dog in tow, we made our way around the park, asking anyone we passed if it was their dog, or if they knew whose dog it was. The response was always no. I started to fret as the time got later, wondering if the owners might have left already. I wondered what we should do with her. It seemed cruel to leave her here, but my mom would have a fit if I brought her home. We continued asking, but both of us had a feeling that we weren't going to find any owners tonight. Finally, a girl gave us some not-so-surprising news.

"That dog is a stray. I've seen it around here for the past few days." She informed us, and we exchanged glances before thanking her and heading back to Su-San's car. We leaned against the hood, the little dog still sleeping soundly in my arms. I looked at her pathetically, wishing she had an owner.

"Su-San, what am I going to do? I can't just leave her here! But... Mom is going to be pissed... And I already have Lukas there... I am soooooo going to get grounded for this one!" I wailed, and he tried to give me a smile.

"Tell her tha' she'll be 'our' dog. She ca' come stay at mah house sometimes." He offered, and I did my best to smile. That would definitely make my punishment less. This decided, we got

into the car, and I returned the dog to my lap to continue her nap. She didn't seem to mind the drive, barely stirring at all. I smiled at her, knowing I was getting in trouble thanks to her, but not really caring. I scratched at her fur absentmindedly, then realised something.

"Su-San!" I cried, and he snapped his attention to me, as did the now awake dog.

"W-Wha'? Wha's wrong?" He questioned urgently.

"She doesn't have a name!" I exclaimed. Su-San stared at me, then his head fell onto the steering wheel. Luckily, we had reached a stop light, so he wasn't putting us in danger by doing this.

"...Don' scare me like tha'!" He commanded, and I smiled sheepishly.

"Sorry... I didn't mean to..." I apologized, and he sighed, putting his foot on the gas as the light changed.

"S'ok. Wha' do ya wan' ta name 'er?" He asked, and I gave her a good hard look.

"Hmm... I don't know... Let's see... Go For It Bomber?" I tried. Su-San looked over at me, his eyebrow raised. "No? Okei, um... Sardine Picnic?" This time he just stared.

"Fin..."

"Okei, okei, let me try again... Um... How about Bloody Hanatamago?"

"Bloody wha'?"

"Hanatamago? They're the only two words I remember from that time I tried to learn Japanese..." I admitted, and he just continued to give me a look. Then he remembered he was driving and looked back to the road.

"...How abou' jus' Hanatamago." He asked, but it wasn't really a question.

"But the Bloody makes it cooler!" I insisted, but he shook his head.

"Too long. Jus' Hanatamago." He decided, leaving no room for me to argue. I did my best to send a pout his way, guilt tripping him with a depressed sounding "fine..." Unfortunately, his resolve did not falter. I guess Hanatamago would do. Still not as cool though.

We pulled up to his driveway, and I gulped, the fear of facing my mother resurfacing. But I had no choice, for Hanatamago's sake! I steeled myself, then made my way to my front door, Su-San close on my tail. I opened the door, and used my feet to pull my shoes off, leaving them behind. I made my way to the kitchen, and took a deep breath right before I entered. Bracing myself, I stepped in. My mother was cooking, but she had heard me come in.

"Tino, where have you been? Lukas is over at Berwald's house with Mathias, but they didn't know where you had gone either, so I was worried si... Get out." She turned around halfway through her sentence, and her expression darkened. I winced, not expecting that level of harshness.

"I'm sorry mom! We went to the park, and then she ran up, and we tried to find her owner, but we couldn't, and then a girl told us she was a stray, and we couldn't just leave her there! So Su-San said he would let her stay at his house sometimes too, and her name is Hanatamago, without the Bloody, and please don't ground me!" I gushed out, surely sounding crazed to my mother. She sighed, sat down at the table, and rubbed her temples.

"...Tino..."

"Please mom! Please! We can't just leave her, and I'm sorry, and..."

"Tino..."

"I'm sorry! I promise I'll take care of her, and..."

"TINO!" She shouted, and I clammed up, clutching Hanatamago to my chest. Mom paused, then drew in a breath. "She is your responsibility. If she makes a mess, you will clean it up. You will feed her, walk her, and bathe her. She sleeps in your room. Do I make myself clear?" She asked, and it took my brain a moment to process what she had said. Then I broke into a huge grin.

"Oh my gosh mom, thank you so much! I'll take care of her, everyday! Thank you so so much!" I cried, hugging her with the arm I wasn't using to hold Hanatamago.

"Yoo, you're welcome. Now get upstairs before I change my mind." She commanded, and I nodded, running to the stairs. "And what was her name again?" She asked.

"Hanatamago!" I called back. She gave me a look, then turned to Su-San.

"You let him name her that?" She demanded incredulously, and Su-San nodded. She shook her head in disbelief, then waved us off. I pouted at her as I left, making my way up to my room, Su-San following. After I closed the door, I gave him a grin.

"She didn't kill me!" I exclaimed, and he nodded, sitting on my bed. I sat down next to him, then plopped Hanatamago down next to me. She curiously sniffed my bed, trudging all around it, then hopped off and investigated the remainder of my room. I giggled childishly as I watched her, thoroughly pleased with my new friend. But, with that thought, I remembered another friend.

"Oh! I hope Lukas likes dogs..." I muttered, and Su-San shrugged, falling over to lay on my bed. I chuckled, then joined him, both of us staring up at the ceiling. "You know... I missed you a lot." I said absently, not turning my head. He returned the gesture, both of us keeping our eyes locked on the ceiling.

"Ah missed ya more." He announced, and I giggled.

"I doubt that. But I don't want to fight about it." I decided, smiling to myself. "But... Seriously. I don't ever want to be apart again. Life really sucked without you."

"Ja, I know how ya feel." Su-San muttered, and I finally turned, taking in his profile. Even in the artificial light, he was gorgeous. My heart fluttered, and I looked away quickly, turning my attention back to the ceiling. I heard some gentle thumps, and, after contemplating it for a moment, realised that Hanatamago was trying to get back on the bed. She finally succeeded after a few tries, and crawled up in between Su-San and I, getting comfortable close to my hand. I smiled and went to pet her, but was surprised to feel something smooth as opposed to the fluffy fur I had expected. My face flushed as I realised that my hand had found Su-San's, and I was about to draw back and apologize, but Su-San's hand took mine. I had to stifle a gasp, and I did my best not to look over at him. He let our hands fall to the bed, and I blinked rapidly, not sure what to do. Sure we had held hands before, but... There was always a reason behind it, like me being in danger of falling, or him needing help getting around without his glasses. What reason was there now? I couldn't think of one, granted, I couldn't really think of anything at that moment. So I kept silent, continuing the staring at the ceiling, trying to piece together what the hell was happening.

Was I high? I didn't recall smoking or inhaling anything... Nor did I remember falling asleep... So what was this? I couldn't calm my heart, and I fretted that I was probably sweating out of nervousness. What could Su-San mean by this? Did I dare get my hopes up? I wanted so much for this to be what I had dreamed of for years, but did I have a right to assume that? After all, our relationship was different than that of other boys our age, so this could simply be a friendly gesture.

Su-San rolled over, his free arm coming around to rest on my tummy, his breath tickling my ear. I just allowed him to do as he pleased, frozen for the most part. I felt his nose brush my ear, and I shuddered a little, so very tempted to turn my head and kiss those lips that were so close to mine. But that was a boundary that I wasn't prepared to overstep.

"Fin... Please don't be so rigid... Ah..." Su-San whispered, his lips ghosting over my cheek, his arm pulling me closer. What was this? Surely this couldn't be real! Seriously, if I woke up in a few minutes only to realise that I was dreaming, I was going to be SO pissed. But...

Suddenly... He just stopped. No more movement, no more words, just his soft breathing

against my face. I waited, wondering what had happened to change his mind. He didn't speak often, but he always finished what he was saying. So what had prompted the pause?

"Ah..." He tried again, and hesitated once again. I held my breath, trying so hard not to get my hopes up, and failing miserably. What if this was it? Was Lukas right? Was it actually possible that he liked me back?

Hanatomago decided she wanted some attention though, and wiggled her way up and between our faces, barking once and proceeding to lick my face. I groaned, wishing she would have waited just a little longer. But I would never know what Su-San had meant to say. He released my hand and sat up, looking off at the corner of my room. I took Hanatomago into my arms and pet her little head, feeling a little sad. But I couldn't really blame Hanatomago, as she didn't know what she had done. Actually, I didn't really know what she had done... Maybe she had saved me! Su-San could have been about to tell me that he hated me, for all I knew. I did my best to give her a smile, and cringed as I looked at her. Now that I thought about it, she was still filthy... I don't know why I hadn't thought of that before I let her on my bed, but it was painfully obvious.

I decided she would require a bath. Immediately. I turned to inform Su-San of my plan, but hesitated. How did I confront him? Should I ask about what had just happened, or did I pretend like it hadn't happened? What would be better in this situation? I made a split second decision to just act natural, and stood, offering him a smile.

"Hana needs a bath. Wanna help?" I asked, liking the sound of the new nickname. He turned to look at me, and nodded. I turned around quickly to avoid him seeing my face as it fell. He looked... Sad... Not outwardly, but... His eyes seemed really lonely... Had I done that? Maybe I had chosen the wrong confrontation. Should I have asked what was up? Or was it something else? I fretted silently as I made my way to the back door, and was so distracted that I nearly fell over. Su-San caught me by the back of my shirt, and pulled me upright. I breathed a sigh of relief, then gave him my best grin.

"Thanks! Honestly, I need to start wearing bubble wrap or something..." I trailed off, trying to joke and failing. But his gaze softened a bit, so I guess it hadn't been a COMPLETE failure.

I plopped Hanatomago on the ground, then went inside to get a bucket to wash her in. She was too small to require a big bath, but mom wouldn't let me wash her in the sink. Luckily for me, we owned an old fashioned washtub, which had sat in our attic, untouched, for most of my life. I was glad I could finally give it a purpose, and ventured down into my new basement in search of it. I was fortunate enough that it was one of the few things that wasn't in a box down there, and hoisted up, making my way back to the kitchen.

"Giving her a bath?" My mom asked absently as she went through the bills. I nodded, bringing the tub to the sink and filling it with warm water. "Fill it about halfway. You won't be able to carry it if you fill it anymore than that. And keep her out of the grass. The neighborhood gardener watered the yard, and it'll be muddy." She said, and I sighed, knowing she was right. I let the water run till it was half full, then shut it off and waddled my way to the door. Su-San saw me coming and opened the door for me, and I put it down on the patio. I ran back in and grabbed some shampoo, deciding that human shampoo would have to do for now, then located a towel. I returned to the patio, and found Hanatomago sniffing the fence, but she ran over when I whistled for her.

"Good Girl Hana!" I praised, scooping her up and cuddling with her for a moment. She licked my face, and I could practically sense her pride at being a good dog. "What a smart puppy you are!" I cooed, smiling happily. She yipped, and I chuckled, and finally lowered her into the water.

I can't say that I was expecting her to freak out and leap out. But she did. And ran. Into the yard. The muddy yard. I groaned, and tried to call her back to me. But she had apparently lost her trust in me, as she didn't come this time. Resigning myself to it, I trudged into the yard, cringing at the squish of my feet meeting the mud. Great... Mom was going to yell at me... I walked to her quickly, and she didn't move, so I bent to grab her, but she scurried away right before I could get her. I growled in frustration and walked to her new spot, and repeated the action of trying to catch her. She got away yet again. This time I chased her at a run, and actually felt her fluff as I reached for her, but she managed to evade me. I tried again, and this time fell, splattering my knees with mud.

"Hana!" I whined, standing up and trying to fling the mud from my hands. "Come on! It's just a bath!" I tried, following behind her. She barked, continuing her running. I failed to catch her yet again. So Su-San decided to help. He, too, stepped into the grass, and tried to block off her escape as I reached for her, his hands at the ready should I fail, but she got around him, and both he and I fell to the ground. And that was how we passed the next half hour, both of us running to catch her, both of us failing miserably and falling frequently. I moaned, frustrated, as I stopped to catch my breath.

"T-This is impossible!" I announced, and Su-San nodded as he joined me in the the breath catching. "What should we do?" I asked, eying the dog that was somehow eluding us. Su-San just shrugged, watching her as well. I looked around my yard, trying to see if there was any way to trap her. But, instead of a trap, my eyes fell on the waterhose. I grinned, making my way over to it, and turning the water on. "Alright Hanatamago, I tried to do this the easy way... But you've left me with no choice!" I exclaimed, pointing the hose at her. She yelped, then tore away from the spray quickly as I tried to follow her movements with it. I grinned as she slowly got smaller as her fur got wet, intent on soaking her thoroughly. Unfortunately, I was so focused on this task that I kind of... Might have... Completely forgot that Su-San was standing right where Hana had just run. I gasped as I realised what I had done, but it was much too late. I watched as a wet spot formed where I had accidentally sprayed, then moved to look at his face, which showed mild surprise. I quickly changed the trajectory of the water. "Oh my gosh, I am so so so sorry!" I exclaimed, walking over to inspect the damage. Su-San was silent as I approached, hundreds of apologies coming from my mouth. I looked miserably at his soaked right side. "I'm so sorry Su-San! I didn't mean to..." I never got to finish my apology, as the hose was yanked from my hand, and ice-cold water rained on me from above. I yelped and jumped back, looking at Su-San in disbelief. "Su-Su-San? I said it was an accident!" I said, but he simply shrugged.

"An eye fer an eye." Was his only reply. I stared at him for a moment. Then I went to war. I tugged harshly on the hose, ripping it from his grasp before he could even comprehend what I had done. Using my thumb to direct and amplify the flow of the water, I pointed it in his direction, successfully drenching him from head to toe. He wasn't too far behind on taking action though, and ran out of the way of the water. I followed his path like I had Hanatamago, and I was so focused that I didn't realise that he was closing in on me. Next thing I knew, the hose was yanked from my hands, and I was on the receiving end of the spray. I gasped, running away just as Su-San had done, and tried to close in on him like he had done me.

"Ya really thin' Ah'm goin' ta fall fer mah own trick?" He asked, spraying my face so that I couldn't keep my eyes open unless I covered them with my hands. When the spray directed itself elsewhere, I found that he had moved out of my grasp, and I growled, not liking being beaten at all. I ran over to a tree and used it as cover, waiting for him to come around so that I could wrestle the hose away from him. But he seemed to know what I was doing, as he didn't come. I waited, and waited, and waited. Nothing. So I snuck a peek, wondering what the hold

up was. Of course, stupid actions have stupid consequences, and I was greeted by a face full of water. I gasped, ducking behind the tree again.

Well, I had unintentionally set myself up for disaster. I had forgotten that Su-San was also a good strategist. With not much time to think, I decided to go, suicide bomber style. I ran out from behind the tree and ran straight for Su-San. He didn't seem surprised, and lifted the hose to spray me, but, at the last second, Hana came to my rescue! She leapt onto Su-San's leg, distracting him just long enough for me to get my hands on the hose and tug. Sadly, he has a strong grip, and I couldn't get it away. And so the game of tug-of-war began.

I yanked, he yanked back, I tugged, and he sprayed me in the face. I sputtered, using a hand to deflect the water. He took the chance to pull, and, without the use of my other hand, managed to pull me forward. I gasped as I fell, but somehow managed to take him down with me. In the confusion of falling, he loosened his grip, and I got the hose away. I crawled on top of his stomach, pinning him down, and sprayed his face relentlessly.

“HAHAHA! HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?” I shouted, likely convincing the entire neighborhood that I was mentally unstable. But I didn't care at the moment. I giggled madly as I sprayed him, but then gasped as our positions switched, and I found myself on my back with Su-San straddling me. I growled, turning my face to the side to avoid the water as best as I could. I struggled wildly, somehow succeeding in reversing our positions yet again. This continued, seemingly endlessly, until...

“What the fuck are you two doing?”

Chapter End Notes

And what is this? Is this... PROGRESS? They're ACTUALLY trying to be lovey dovey? When did this happen? And that's pretty much how I feel about this chapter. ^.^ At least it's longer than last time, right? Ahem...

Sorry for any spelling errors... Oh, but, hei, we met Hana in this chapter! Mischievous little thing...

And I'd just like to remind everyone that my profile is an ask account, so feel free to ask me or the characters any questions you might have! Just leave it as a comment on my profile, and I'll get around to answering it!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 23

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Su-San and I both directed our attention to the voice, and he directed the hose elsewhere, allowing me some temporary relief. Lukas and Mathias were standing on the patio, Mathias grinning, Lukas giving us a “what-the-fuck” look, leading me to believe he was the one who had asked. Su-San and I both stared at them stupidly, having apparently forgotten that other people did, indeed, still exist. Mathias caught my eye, and gave me a thumbs up. I blinked, wondering why I had earned that, then, realising my position, I blushed furiously, opening my mouth to explain the situation to the other two boys. But Su-San eliminated that need. Before I could utter a single syllable, Lukas and Mathias found themselves drenched. I gasped, snapping my attention to Su-San, who had a triumphant look plastered all over his face. I raised an eyebrow, and returned to looking at the now soaking wet couple on the patio. Mathias was clearly surprised, and Lukas looked absolutely pissed. I wondered how things were to proceed, but didn't get to ponder it long, as the two of them decided to join our little war. As a team. Mathias literally tackled Su-San, both of them rolling off to the left. Su-San dropped the hose in the process, but I grabbed it before Mathias could have the chance. I was planning on helping Su-San out by spraying Mathias, but Lukas did the same to me, and we fell to the ground, both of us trying to stand and get the hose from the other at the same time. “Let it go Tino!” He commanded, but I didn't loosen my grip.

“No! You let go!”

“You sound like a five-year-old!”

“SO DO YOU!” Both of us emphasized our words with tugs on the hose. Luckily, Su-San won his little wrestling match with Mathias, and yanked the hose from Lukas' grasp, taking my hand and running to the other side of the yard. He turned and began spraying the other two, much to their shouts of disapproval. I giggled, pleased that we were winning, Hanatamago all but forgotten for the moment; Let her be dirty.

Lukas seemed to get tired of being sprayed, and charged at Su-San, winding him enough that he dropped the hose, but not enough to knock him down. He snatched the hose up as quickly as he could, then ran back to Mathias. They proceeded to spray Su-San and I. I groaned, the coldness of the water startling me yet again. Su-San and I both ran towards them, and we both tried to take the hose from Lukas, but Mathias joined in on his side, and, considering the fact that there were four boys tugging on a hose, it didn't take long for someone to fall. First was Lukas, then Mathias fell on top of him as he was left to try to out-tug Su-San and I. (and failed, obviously.) Then went me, my momentum from pulling making me fall into Su-San who tumbled for the same reason.

After we all sat there, stunned momentarily for a moment, we all scrambled for it yet again, ending up looking much like a huge pile of flailing limbs. I wasn't sure who or what I was grabbing anymore, but I halted when I heard Lukas yell.

“HEY!” We all stopped, looking at him attentively. “The water stopped coming out...” He explained, pointing at the now waterless hose. We all looked at each other, wondering who it was that was bending the hose and preventing the water. All of our hands were free. How curious. I picked up the hose and looked at it suspiciously. Where had the water gone? The other three did the same. We all gasped in unison when the water suddenly came out,

spraying our faces mercilessly. After spuddering for a few moments, I looked around for the source of this... Sorcery. And what I found didn't come as much of a surprise. I found my mom holding onto the hose close to the faucet that it came out of, a smug grin on her face. "Mooom!" I groaned, standing up. The others followed suit, and we headed back to the patio. "Don't you 'mooom' me. I told you to stay out of the grass. Look at all of you! You're covered in mud!" She admonished, and we all looked at each other, gauging our overall dirtiness. "I thought you were giving the dog a bath, not TAKING a mud bath!" She continued. Lukas and Mathias exchanged a look, but didn't question it. "Honestly Tino, you've got the nastiest habit of doing exactly what I tell you not to do!" She finally finished. We all glanced around awkwardly, wondering what our fate was to be. She let us suffer for a moment longer, then sighed.

"Try to get as much mud off as possible. Two of you go to Berwald's house and shower, the other two shower here. Then I want all four of you in the living room. Go." She commanded, handing me the hose. "And Tino, get that dog clean." She added, walking back into the house. I waited for her to leave, then groaned, turning to the other three.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to get all of you in trouble..." I offered pathetically. Mathias grinned at me, and Su-San ruffled my hair. I gave him a glance, hoping he wasn't too mad at me.

"Not a problem shorty!" Mathias assured, wrapping a muddy arm around his boyfriend.

"It's expected that four teenage boys will get into trouble, one way or another." Lukas pointed out, removing Mathias' arm from his shoulders. "Please, refrain from fretting. I know that's what this is going to lead to, so let's just stop it here. No fretting. It isn't your fault, we all did it." He finished. I gave him a small smile.

"Right! I will do my best to refrain from fretting and/or sulking!" I announced, clicking my heels together and saluting. Mathias chuckled and Lukas gave me a smile. "Now that that's decided, who wants to help me catch the dog?" I asked.

"Oh, that's right. You have a dog? How was I not aware of this?" Lukas asked, and I chuckled.

"Well, technically speaking, I didn't have one until today." I admitted. Hanatamago seemed to realise she was being talked about, as she gave a clipped bark in our direction, attracting the attention of all four of us. "Aaaaand, that's her. Come here, Hanatamago." I called. She seemed to be over her anger at being sprayed, and came to my side, allowing me to pick her up. I stuck my tongue out at her wet texture.

"What did you say her name was?" Lukas questioned.

"Hanatamago."

"...You let him name her that?" He turned to Su-San as he asked this, and again he shrugged his shoulders. I huffed, pouting as I held her.

"Why does everyone ask that?" I demanded, and Lukas gave me a bored look.

"It's a weird name Tino." He pointed out, and I flushed.

"I-It's not weird! It's a cool name! It was even cooler with the bloody!" I protested. He rose an eyebrow, and put his arms out.

"I'm not even going to ask. Oh... Why is she so... Gross?" He questioned as I transferred her over to him. I chuckled, wiping my hands on my pants.

"She's wet! That's how we got in the water fight in the first place! Don't worry, she's fluffy when she dries!" I assured, and he gave me a small nod, looking little Hanatamago over, now able to get a closer look. She barked at him, wiggling her entire butt instead of just her tiny little tail. He gave the smallest of smiles, offering her to me yet again.

"We're going to go ahead and shower. Are you alright with going to Berwald's house for yours?" He asked, and I nodded, grabbing Hana around the middle and bringing her to the

tub yet again, this time determined to clean her. I'd be damned if she got away again! As soon as she realised that I planned to lower her into the water, she began to squirm, but I held on fast, holding her middle down, forcing her to stay put. She whined pathetically, and I grinned triumphantly. Keeping my eyes locked on her struggling figure, I reached blindly behind myself, using my hand to feel around for the soap. My fingers finally brushed plastic, and I grabbed it, opening the bottle with my teeth and poured some on her back. She freaked out even more after that, but I didn't let go, putting the soap bottle down and scrubbing with my free hand.

"Almost done. Just chill out." I promised, pushing the soap to cover the rest of her body. She wriggled, but seemed to have accepted her fate. I finished up, dunking her into the water and rinsing the soap off. Satisfied with her cleanliness, I pulled her out of the water and into the towel that was still waiting. She seemed to like the towel, rubbing against it as I rubbed at her. I then wrapped it around her and cradled her like a baby, poking her nose as she barked and snuggled into it.

"See? That wasn't so bad!" I pointed out, and sneezed, making me chuckle. "And now it's my turn!" I announced, walking through the door that Su-San had opened for me. I could hear the shower running upstairs. Mom was in the living room, watching some soap opera on TV.

"Hei mom, we're going over to Su-San's house to shower. I'm going to leave Hana here, so can you keep an eye on her till I get back?" I asked, and she rolled her eyes.

"What happened to 'I'll take care of her everyday!'" She asked, and I groaned, plopping her down.

"I have to bathe at some point, don't I?" I demanded, walking towards the laundry area and throwing the wet towel at the washing machine, then grabbing some clean clothes to wear when I got out.

"Make it quick." She shot back.

"Yessir!" I called, following Su-San out the front door. We made the quick trip to his house, trudging up the stairs to the bathroom. Then realisation hit me.

"O-Oh... You can go first... I'll wait!" I decided, going back towards the stairs, planning to wait outside in hopes that I wouldn't get his house muddy. But before I could even set foot on the top stair, he grabbed my arm and pulled me back, pushing me gently into the bathroom and closing the door behind us. "W-Wha..."

"Tha'll take too long. Share." He said, turning the water on and letting it warm up. I didn't even have to glance at the mirror to know that my face was bright red. Take a shower? With Su-San? I could die! I WOULD die!

"S-Su-San? I-I really don't mind w-waiting! I mean, i-its not like you take long sh-showers or anything!" I tried, hating myself for stuttering. He turned and gave me the look, then started pulling his shirt off. I 'eep'ed and looked away, hearing a sigh immediately following.

"Fin, Ah though' we talked 'bou' this." He said, grabbing the hem of my shirt. "Ya don' have anythin' to be em'arrassed 'bou'. 'S jus' me." He assured, pulling my shirt up and over my head. I stifled the urge to pull it back, lifting my arms up and allowing him to take it.

"Su-San... I-I..."

"Fin, Ah've seen ya butt na'ed 'fore. 's no' like this is the firs' time we' shared a bath." He pointed out.

"I know... I just..." I started, not sure what I even wanted to say. He was right; it's not like this would be a new thing... But we had grown up, we were different, especially our bodies. And it wasn't just me that I was worried about. I won't lie, if presented the chance, I would sure as hell take a look. What if I got caught? What would he think?

My thoughts were brought back when I felt a hand ruffling my hair, making me jump a little

in surprise. Su-San stared at me, patting my head in the way that he does, then pulled his glasses off. MY eyes widened when I realised; He's practically blind without his glasses!

"Be'er?" He asked, raising an eyebrow slightly. I chuckled, and nodded.

"I suppose so. I forgot that you can't see!" I admitted, already feeling more confident about the whole thing. If he couldn't see me, what was the harm? I mean, sure, he could see some vague outlines, but nothing detailed!

"Goo'." He said, undoing the button of his jeans. I flushed yet again, looking away. Just because he couldn't see me didn't mean I couldn't see him! But I had to act like I wasn't bothered! Honestly, what kind of guy is freaked out by seeing another one naked? So, my resolve in place, I turned around and began stripping my lower half. Slowly... Slowly... Too slow! I was taking too long! I had to scream at myself 'JUST GET IT OVER WITH!' So I did. I just pulled my pants and underwear down as fast as I could, my whole body flushing as I did. I hadn't expected to still be this worried about it! I had hoped I would have somehow mentally convinced myself that this wasn't a TOTALLY awkward situation. Alas, my mind was too focused on getting out of my pants.

I had to calm down. It was just Su-San. Just Su-San! I'd seen him naked before, he'd seen me naked before, it's not like this was any different. I mean, it was totally different, in every way, and I knew it, but I was TRYING to convince myself otherwise. I could do this! It was just a shower! Just a few minutes, and it would be over!

I turned back around, my eyes closed, and took a deep breath before opening them. Su-San was already in the shower, much to my relief, and I shuffled over and stepped in behind him. I tried to avert my eyes, I swear I did, but what did you really expect? He was there, he was naked, and he was wet! And the water fell down his body in all the wrong (absolutely, perfectly right) ways, drawing my eyes down. The way his back muscles flexed as he ran fingers through his hair, almost like waves on the ocean, rippling across, leading down to a just-as-toned...Butt... I flushed even more as I thought about it, opting to look at my feet as a distraction. I was afraid that if I kept looking, just looking wouldn't be enough. I'd want to touch, and that is strictly forbidden.

"Tra'e ya." He offered, startling me from my thoughts, and I complied, pushing myself against the wall and trying to walk around him. He did the same on the opposite side, but needless to say, considering the size of two teenage boys, our bodies brushed against each other in the middle. I had to stifle the gasp that seriously threatened to escape. Well... Had to try, anyway. It came out, but I realised that I could use the water as my excuse. I mean, who doesn't have to adjust to water at first?

Luckily for me, I was so busy trying not to act awkward that I somehow avoided arousal. How I did this, I'll never know, but I'm glad I did, or that shower would have been ten times MORE awkward! I did my best to focus on getting my hair wet, ignoring whatever Su-San was doing. We had to trade again to rinse, and again for conditioner. Then came body washing... Fabulous.

I reached for the soap, noticing that my hand was shaking and forcing it to steady. I've cleaned myself plenty of times, why would this be different?

"ere." I heard, then jumped as I felt something touch my hand. Looking down, I found Su-San was offering me a washcloth, and I accepted it, quickly pouring some soap on it and lathering it up until there was a thin layer of foam. I washed all of my not-awkward bits first, getting them out of the way. Then, after glancing over my shoulder and making sure that Su-San wasn't looking, I washed the totally-awkward bits. After completing the menial task, I breathed a sigh of relief. My shower had gone pretty smoothy, if I do say so myself. I waited for my turn with the showerhead, holding the washcloth loosely in my hand. (It's not as if I

had anything else to do with it!) But next thing I knew, it was being pulled from my hand.

“S-Su-San?” I asked, turning to give him a curious look that I doubt he could see.

“Ah'll ge' yer back.” He informed me, and I flushed. Of course he would... Well, why not? It's what friends are for, I guess. I turned so that I was facing away from him, giving him full access to my back. I shivered as I felt him run the cloth over my back. (I always have been sensitive there...) But it was definitely a good shiver.

“Th-Thanks, Su-San.” I mumbled, closing my eyes while he worked his way down. I wondered just how far he planned to go... I mean, surely he planned to stop soon... Right? I don't think I could contain myself if he went any lower... Luckily (unfortunately) he stopped at my hips, then moved around me to allow me into the spray. I turned quickly, keeping my back to him, but flashed him a quick, appreciative, smile. I rinsed off, watching the bubbles gather at the drain, and slowly ebb away. I was contemplating how to go about this entire thing. The correct, friendly thing to do would be to offer the same service to Su-San, but I wasn't sure if I would be able to do it without getting aroused. I mean, I had somehow managed until then, but if I actually touched him... Well, I would venture to say that it would probably be over. Still, it was what had to be done, so I worked up the most of my courage, and turned around.

“Su-San? I-I'll do yours too!” I offered, and he turned to look over his shoulder. After staring for a moment, he handed me the washcloth, and offered his back, as I had done. I blushed, but got to work, cleaning his already spotless back. Feeling those muscles underneath my fingers, my mind was blown. So firm, so perfect. I flushed again as I moved downwards, resolved to go just as far as he had.

“Than' ya.” He said, taking the cloth from me and rinsing himself as well. I opened the shower door, ready to get out, but... I... Kind of... Might have... Seen... It... OKEI! I TOTALLY saw it! Oh my gosh, I can't even tell you how red I got! And even worse, HOW THE HELL WAS I TO COMPETE WITH THAT? Seriously? The only word I have for it is formidable!

SUBJECT CHANGE! TOWEL DRYING! TOTALLY interesting, right? I dried myself off, then started slipping into my clothes, hoping to be dressed before he could get out. But, as is typical with me, I totally miscalculated, and had only succeeded in clothing my lower half. I flushed as he looked at me, but I guess it was better than being totally naked. I pulled my shirt on, then gave him a smile.

“I'm going to go home, so I'll see you there in a few, okei?” I informed him, and he nodded. I grabbed my muddy clothes and made my way back over to my house. Lukas and Mathias were waiting, Lukas sitting on the floor and playing with Hanatamago. I smiled at them, and sat down next to Lukas. Hana, upon seeing/smelling me, left Lukas and came trotting over, getting comfortable in my lap.

“Traitor...” Lukas muttered, giving her a pointed glare. I chuckled, scratching her now clean, soft, and fluffy fur. She gave a little yip, then cuddled up for a nap. What a sleepy dog...

“Hey, where's Waldy? Still showering?” Mathias interrupted, and grimaced at the name that I knew Su-San hated.

“Getting dressed. I finished before he did.” I replied, and both boys looked at me oddly. “W-What?” I demanded, wondering what I had done that had offended them so.

“You... You mean you two showered together?” Lukas asked, and I tilted my head in confusion, not seeing the issue.

“Yes? Um... Is there something wrong with that?” I inquired, and Lukas groaned.

“Tino! THAT is one of those things that I told you to look for!” He scolded, and my eyes widened.

“Huh? Why? Friends shower together sometimes!” I pointed out, defensive.

“Yeah, if they're GIRLS.” He retorted, looking smug all of a sudden.

“B-But it was just a...”

“Whatever you say Tino.” He cut me off, just as Su-San walked in. I blushed, trying not to remember what was underneath those clothes.

“Oh... H-Hei Su-San!” I greeted, and he gave me a nod. Hanatamago stirred as the excitement in the room escalated, and took her turn greeting him as well, with a little bark.

“Is everyone assembled?” My mother called, coming in. “Looks like it. Good. Now for punishment.”

I pouted, already weary by the tone of her voice.

“As punishment for ruining my yard, you will be fixing it. The gardener dropped off a whole bunch of flowers. You four are going to plant them. They're in front of the garage. Get to it.”

She commanded, then walked back into the kitchen she had come from. We all looked around at each other, surprised at the simplicity of the task, relieved that it was such a lenient punishment.

Chapter End Notes

I... Actually, I don't really have much to say...

KuroRiya

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Chapter 24

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Needless to say, we were all in quite a bit of pain following the planting of flowers. I can't say that it wasn't a fun way to spend a Sunday though. Su-San and Mathias had a mini fight over how to plant the tulips, and whether the tulips or roses should be in front, but, in the end, we got it all planted, and it didn't look too bad, if I do say so myself. (Which I do.) Not surprisingly, Lukas and I were quite ready for bed following dinner, and passed out almost as soon as I had closed the door.

We woke up and ventured to Su-San's house the next day, as was our ritual. All seemed normal, until we got to school. After parking and making our way to the doors, our attention was drawn immediately to a crowd. For what purpose could they be gathering? They hadn't even shown interest in a fight until it turned physical, but I could hear no scuffle taking place. That meant there was either no fight, or the two fighting were being very quiet about it... I dismissed the thought, glancing at the others, finding they were just as curious as me. So, just like the mindless teenagers we are, we joined the crowd, trying to see what they were so enraptured by. Being me, and the most curious of our little group, I pushed my way to the front quickly. At first, I was confused. There was nothing exciting to be seen, as far as I could tell. But upon a second glance, I noticed a new face among the sea of vaguely familiar ones. The most defining factor of him was his face, which made quick work of announcing his Asian ancestry. He was small, even shorter than me, much to my surprise, and very thin. And he looked absolutely TERRIFIED. People were firing question after question at him, some grabbing him and pulling him closer so that he could hear them. As I watched, I heard his heavily accented voice stumbling to put together enough English words to count as an answer. I immediately felt pity, seeing the poor kid looking so lost, so awkward, so scared. I steeled myself for what I was about to do, pushing my way up to him, and grabbing his wrist. I felt him flinch, and he gave me a worried look, probably thinking I was planning on throwing my question in among the hundreds already pouring down on him. I offered him a quick smile, of the apologetic variety, then pulled him closer, through the crowd. People began making noises of anger and confusion at having lost their entertainment, but I continued to lead him through. Once we broke from the crowd, I pulled him into a run, leading him away as quickly as I could. I took him to the table that I sat at for lunch, then turned to make sure no one had followed us, and finally released him. I took a moment to catch my breath before speaking to him.

"Sorry about that, I'm sure I startled you. But you looked like you could use some help." I explained, and his widened eyes relaxed a bit, going back to a semi-normal, if not slightly confused face.

"O-Oh, ha... Yes. Thank you." He tried, and I caught the slip up, but didn't mention it.

"No problem. You might want to hide here until the bell rings though." I suggested, and he nodded.

"Yes, I think that would be for the best." He agreed. I took a seat at the table, and gestured for him to do the same. He took the seat three chair to my right.

"...Well, I'd like to ask you questions, but that would defeat the purpose of saving you... So I guess I'll tell you about myself instead?" I offered, and he gave me a small smile.

"That would be nice, please do." He said, and I smiled back.

"Okei, well, let's see... My name is Tino Väinämöinen. I'm sixteen, a junior, Finnish, um..." I trailed, running out of simple things to say about myself. He held up his hand, to halt me.

"Tino... I cannot say your family name... I am sorry..." He admitted, and I smiled.

"It's fine, most people can't. I have trouble with it myself, sometimes." I assured, and he gave a single little chuckle.

"You are...Sixteen, and a junior... That is eleventh grade, yes?" He asked, and nodded. "And you are... Finished? With what?" He asked, looking confused. I laughed, shaking my head.

"Not finished, 'Finnish'. It means I come from Finland." I explained. His face got red, quite quickly.

"O-Oh, I am sorry!" He apologized, and I did my best to comfort him.

"No, don't be sorry! I thought it was funny!" I consoled, and he seemed to relax a bit.

"Okay, still, I am sorry. I didn't mean to. I am still getting used to English..."

"Yes, I can tell, but you're doing well. How long have you been learning it? Oh, wait, that's a question! Sorry!" I caught myself, feeling bad for letting my curiosity get the better of me.

"No, it is okay. At least you did not attack me the second you saw me..." He trailed, looking down at where the crowd had been. (It had already dispersed...) "I am Kiku Honda. I am from Japan, not China. And before you ask, yes, there are more Asian countries than just China."

He deadpanned, and I laughed. "I am seventeen, and also what you call a junior. I think... I am in eleventh grade... That is junior, yes?" He asked, pausing. I nodded, and he smiled, continuing. "I am not dating, but I am not going to date anyone. In my country it is considered normal for a man to wait to date until he is older. I do not want to be your boyfriend. I am not, what do you say... Gay? Is that the word? I think so. I am not gay, to the best of my knowledge. Please refrain from flirting with me." He droned, sounding like he had this practised, which, judging by the way he was surrounded earlier, he probably had.

"Ha, sounds like you've had a rough day so far, hmm?" I chuckled. He nodded, giving me a you-have-no-idea look. "This must be pretty different from Japan." I added, and he nodded.

"Yes. Everyone is so rude here... And they touch each other a lot... And they talk a lot too. I do not usually talk this much to other students." He admitted, and I frowned.

"Oh, I'm sorry, am I bothering you?" I asked, feeling bad already. I had wanted to help him out, but I just ended up making it even harder for him.

"No, I do not mind. You seem nice enough. It is just something I will have to get used to."

"I guess we do talk a lot around here, now that I thi..."

"Fin?" I heard a voice call, and I turned to find Su-San walking up the stairs.

"Oh, Su-San! Hei!" I called, waving him over. He finished climbing the stairs, then gave Kiku a quick glance. "Right, this is Kiku. Oh, I'm sorry, should I call you by your last name? I forgot to ask..." I turned back to Kiku, and he smiled.

"I am surprised you know about that. You are the first who has asked. But Kiku is fine. It is the American way, after all." He pointed out, and I smiled.

"Okei, then, this is Kiku. Kiku, this is Su-San." I announced, gesturing to him.

"Berwald." He corrected, and I chuckled.

"Right, sorry, Su-San is just my nickname for him." I explained upon seeing the confusion on Kiku's face.

"Su...San?" He questioned, cocking his head slightly.

"Oh, right. I've known him since I was young... Like... Five. I had just watched a Japanese cartoon the day before, and the honorific kind of stuck in my mind. And I wasn't very creative with names back then, so Su-San was the best I came up with. It just... Stuck." I tried to explain. I think I just confused him more with my explanation, but he nodded anyway. Su-

“Alright guys, we’re going to be playing soccer for a while. Which, for everyone except Alfred, means we’re playing football.” The coach announced. Alfred raised his hand, and the

coach groaned. "Yes, Alfred?"

"So, dude, are we playing soccer or football? You said both, you gotta make up your mind!"

He questioned, and the coach partook in a small facepalm.

"We're playing soccer Alfred. I was just pointing out that, in almost every country except America, soccer is called football." The coach explained, and Alfred raised a confused eyebrow.

"But soccer and football are totally different sports! You can't call them both football! I mean, one is totally awesome and manly, and the other one is gay and..."

"Just drop it you bloody wanker. He was making a joke, but clearly your smile minded American brain can't handle humor." Arthur snapped, and he and Alfred proceeded to have a glaring contest.

"...Anyway... Before we actually start playing, we're going to take a few days to learn how to play. Today is just kicking practise." Coach announced, and we all shook our heads, already knowing how to play, for the most part. "We're going to need a goalie... Tino! You're goalie for today. Everyone else, half field!" He commanded, and I groaned.

"Of COURSE I'm goalie. Kick gently, please?" I begged my friends, and I got small smiles of encouragement. I headed over to the net, poising myself, doing the best to prepare for what was about to happen. What was about to happen? Well, to sum it up: About thirty teenage boys, kicking somewhat hard balls in my general direction. Me, with no guards of any sort, and little to no hand-eye-foot coordination. Yeah. Welcome to being goalie.

Coach blew his whistle, and everyone lined up. He threw a ball, and it was kicked. I grabbed for it, and somehow, miraculously, managed to catch it. Proud of myself, I threw it in his general direction so he reuse it. The next came, and, though I didn't catch it, I blocked it with my foot. So far so good. I continued like this, missing only about three. I was immensely proud of myself! I'd never done that well, and I felt utterly awesome at that point. But, alas, karma has a way of dashing hopes. Unfortunately, it's usually painful when I am involved... It was Ivan's second turn. I had missed his first ball, so I was determined to get this one. So determined in fact, that I completely failed to notice the shoe that had somehow fallen off of his foot while he was kicking, and was heading straight for my head. In my defense, I caught the ball. But his shoe caught my head. Pretty hard. I yelped, falling to my knees and putting my hands over the spot where the shoe had hit. Damn, I didn't think a shoe could cause this much pain...

"Oww... Perkele!" I whined, biting back the tears that almost all pain will cause to well up. I didn't even notice that everyone had stopped what they were doing. That added to my surprise when I felt arms around me, and I glanced up to find Su-San, giving me a concerned look.

"Are ya okej Fin?" He asked, and I blushed.

"Y-Yoo, I'm fine!" I assured, wriggling away and standing up. I regretted it though, as head throbbed and I swooned a bit. Su-San caught me on my way down, then put his arm under my knees, picking me up.

"Ah'm goin' ta take 'im to the nurse." He informed Coach, who merely nodded, looking a little surprised. (Probably at the fact that Su-San was strong enough to pick me up.) I tried to hide my face, thoroughly embarrassed at being carried off the field like a stupid damsel in distress.

"I can walk, Su-San..."

"No, ya can't." He decided, pushing the doors open with his elbow. I glowered at him, but didn't struggle. I knew this was a losing battle. He was in overprotective mother hen mode now. No reasoning with him. "Ah shoul' 'ave punched 'im." He announced, and my eyes

widened.

“W-What?” I asked, shocked by the malice in his words.

“He hur' ya. Shoul' 'av hur' 'im.” He reasoned, and I shook my head.

“It was an accident! He didn't mean to!” I pointed out.

“Ya don' know tha'.” He argued. I was incredulous.

“What reason would he have to hurt me?” I questioned. “Anyone's shoe could have come loose! Even yours!” I said, and his eyes narrowed.

“Ah'd kill maself.” He said simply, and I gasped.

“WHAT?” I demanded, not even wanting to humor that idea.

“Ah'd kill maself if Ah ever hur' ya.” He reiterated.

“...You CANNOT be serious! It's just a little bruise! It's to be expected when playing sports!”

I argued, and he shook his head. But we didn't get a chance to converse further, as we entered the nurses office. Her expression told me that she was surprised, and I couldn't blame her, considering how we walked in.

“U-Um, what's the matter?” She asked.

“He's hur” Su-San informed her, and I wanted to face-palm at how obvious it was. (But I refrained, as my face was currently a pretty tender area.

“I'm fine. I just got hit in the head with a shoe. It's not like I'm dying. He's just overdramatic.”

I explained, and I saw her take a small breath of relief.

“Oh, alright then. Please, sit him down on that mattress. I'll get you a cold compress hon.”

She directed, and Su-San did as he was told, laying me down on the indicated bed. He then sat down on a chair in front of me, looking rather put off.

“...Su-San? Is something wrong?” I asked, and he just sighed, taking his glasses off and rubbing the bridge of his nose. That, my friends, is NEVER a good sign. He only ever does that when he is REALLY stressed out. What I had done to elicit this from him, I didn't know, but I didn't like to think that I was stressing him out so much.

“Ah'm jus' worried.” He explained, resting his face in his hands. “Ah ha'e i' when ya ge' hur'.

Drives me crazy imaginin' ya in pain.” He continued. I frowned, surprised that he really thought so much of me. Not sure what to do, I tried to think back to what he did when I fretted. The only thing I could think of was him ruffling my hair, so I did that... Kind of. I put my hand on the top of his head, rubbing in what I hoped was a comforting motion.

“I'm sorry, I didn't know you worried so much. But honestly, I'm fine. It doesn't even hurt anymore!” Well, that was a total lie. Truth be told, my head was still throbbing painfully, but I was more focused on calming Su-San down. He looked up, putting his glasses back on, then leaning over so that his face was over mine. I held my breath, not sure what he was doing, but not planning on protesting, whatever it was. He came closer, his lips ghosting over my forehead. Surprised, I flinched, and he pulled away.

“Yer a ba' liar, Fin.” He informed me, laying his head on my chest.

“S-Sorry...” I offered, trying to force my heartbeat to slow down, as he could easily hear it from where he was.

“S'okej. I's a goo' thing fer me.” He assured, taking a deep breath. I did my best to remain as still as possible, not wanting him to get up, but knowing he would have to, sooner or later. Turns out it was sooner, as the nurse came in with the promised icepack, and Su-San was forced to extract himself from me.

“Alright hon, let me see that forehead.” She commanded, and I brushed my bangs away so she could have a look. “Hmm... Well, it doesn't look too bad... I bet it hurts something awful though... And your face is a bit flushed... Do you feel hot?” She asked, but I shook my head.

“N-No, I feel fine, really. J-Just let me lay down for a bit, and I'll go back to class!” I said,

and she nodded, handing me the icepack.

“Okay, you can leave whenever you feel up to it. And I assume you'll be waiting with him?” She asked, looking at Su-San, who nodded. “Just this once, alright? Come back and see me if it gets too bad, okay?” She asked, making it sound less like a request and more like a demand.

“I will. Thank you.” I replied, and she took her leave, going to attend to a boy who had just walked in. I sighed, pressing the ice to my forehead, flinching when it touched my skin. But it brought more relief than pain, so I let it lay on my face, sighing in contentment. I was lost in thought, and relief, so I jumped a bit when Su-San took my hand in his. Glancing over, I saw him watching me, and the flush I had finally gotten rid of returned. He rubbed absently at the back of my hand with his thumb, his face softening as he did so.

Chapter End Notes

And that's the cutoff, because reasons. Haha, here's a little story for you guys: A long, long time ago, when this fic was still a baby, maybe five chapters or so, one of my reviewers asked something along the lines of “Will there be a nurse's office scene?” And I laughed it off, and said something like “No, no way too cliché! I don't want my story to turn out like every other one out there!”

And then I wrote this chapter. :pokerface:

Well, I feel bad, because I can't remember which reviewer that was, and I don't have the attention span necessary to go through all of my reviews again. (Maybe some day...) I think I know who it was, but I don't want to guess wrong. Better safe than sorry.

Anyway, the same person said something like “You would find a way to make it totally original!” Well, I hope I lived up to that. Aaaand here is proof that NO highschool fic is complete without a nurse scene... This one comes off as awfully fluffy to me though... Is it just me? Aheh?

Well, sorry to say, but you are all about to be plunged into my world of strange pairings, likely against your will. I support some pretty strange/rare couples, and I'm afraid that it is IMPOSSIBLE to change pairings that I ship. Hope I don't lose any readers based on my pairings... They are just side pairings, after all. Anyway, you can already probably guess a few of my weird ones...

Well, not much to say, but be prepared for something horribly RANDOM in the next chapter. Let's just say that my Spring Break has inspired quite a few things... Oh, speaking of inspiration, this chapter is a result of me playing the Wii fit with my friend. It was my turn, and there is a game in which you have to head soccer balls, but avoid shoes and panda heads that will occasionally fly at you. ...I somehow managed to hit every SINGLE shoe. Yeah. And then, boom, inspiration! Haha, fun times.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 25

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Following the trip to the nurse, I returned to class, but Coach wanted me to go ahead and sit the rest of his class out, so I changed out, and simply watched the other boys play. I can't say that I disapproved of his choice to remove me from the field. It meant less physical exertion for me, so all the better! (I suppose it must be that mentality that led to this little muffintop, huh?) Honestly, the rest of my day was rather boring, a normal day, only the shoe incident setting it apart from any other. We rode home, and had a group “try to do homework, end up getting distracted” event. Then Lukas and I went to my home, and went to sleep after showers.

Nothing worth mentioning happened until the next day. And when that something happened... Well... It was QUITE mentionable.

The bell had rung and role had been called, we were all in our seats, chatting quietly. Mr. Raimondo stood, clearing his throat, gaining our attention. He looked a bit... Worried.

“Ahem. Well... I have some news that will shock and likely excite the majority of you. All of you, along with the other A classes, will be going on a week-long school-sanctioned trip, God help us.” He announced. He then paused, and I realised why very quickly.

“Holy shit teach, seriously?” Alfred asked, and received a glare for his language, as well as a stiff nod in confirmation of his inquiry.

“A whole week?” This time Toris asked, and also received a nod.

“How are we getting there?” Lukas questioned, and Mr. Raimondo sighed.

“If you'll all be quiet, I'll give you the details.” He said, and everyone fell into silence obediently. “...Alright then. We will leave Sunday morning, meaning you must meet here at school at seven o'clock. And yes, I said Sunday. If you are late, we will leave without you, so I suggest you make double sure that you will be here on time. Set two alarms if you have to. Moving on. From the school, we will take a bus to the airport, and we will fly to Faiacre. As with other trips, your airfare is waived, as well as entrance tickets to activities that we have planned, and your meals will be provided. However, any other expenditures, which includes souvenirs and activities not in our itinerary, will be your financial responsibility. We have reserved an inn for you, and you will pick your roommates. Two to a room. Choose wisely.” He finished, and then sat down. We immediately began to talk to each other, most of us already choosing our roommates, some just spewing excitement. I, not used to this kind of thing at all, looked around helplessly, finally turning to Lukas.

“Wh-What?” I asked, not even able to make a full question.

“It's been a while since they've done this... I don't think I've heard mention of a trip here since fifth grade...” Lukas said conversationally, and I tilted my head in confusion. He smiled.

“Every few years, a lucky group gets to go on a huge trip, sponsored by the school. They say that it is “to improve student relations and create stronger bonds throughout the classes.”

“R-Really? And it's us? That's so lucky! But only the A classes get to go? That seems a bit unfair...”

“No, we're just first. The entire school gets to go, but we go in letter order. They can't send THAT many kids at once.” He explained, and I nodded.

“That makes sense, I guess. But wow, my old school never did anything like this! How

I woke up to Su-San gently shaking me, informing me that we had landed and it was time to get off. He helped me get my bag down from the compartment, then led me off the plane. I followed in a bit of a daze, and didn't realise that I had boarded a bus until some lady started

talking to us over an intercom. I looked around, startled, wondering why we were being addressed as such. Su-San wrapped an arm around my shoulders and bent down to my ear level.

“Takin' a tour. Then we're goin' ta the inn.” He explained, and I smiled apologetically, nodding. I did my best to force myself into attention, and listened to the tour, making sure to make mental notes of places that sounded interesting. Finally, the bus brought us to what couldn't be mistaken for anything besides the inn that we would be staying in. I smiled happily, following the flow of students into the building. Sure, I was excited, but I was too tired at the moment, and I knew that I wouldn't fully enjoy anything in this state.

I found the inn quite charming. It was large, but very cozy looking, similar to the feeling that one gets from a warm log cabin. We all received our keys, and the majority of us went immediately to our rooms, though a few still had enough energy to venture out. Su-San followed me silently, helping me open the door when I failed. I offered a weary thanks, dropping my suitcase on the floor as he closed the door with his foot. I looked up, planning on deciding which bed I wanted to sleep in, but was met with a curious sight.

Either I was REALLY tired, or there was only one bed in this room. I turned to Su-San, and the look on his face confirmed my suspicions. There really WAS only one bed.

“U-Um... I think there was a mistake... We were supposed to get a double, right?” I asked and he nodded, his brows furrowed. “Hmm... Should we go ask for a different room?” I wondered aloud, then gasped as he shut the curtains, bathing the room in darkness, temporarily blinding me. “Su-San?” I called, blinking rapidly as my eyes adjusted. When I could see well enough, I realised that Su-San was making his way over to the bed. He took his glasses off, setting them on the bedside table, then he began stripping off his clothes.

“Doesn' ma'er. 's jus' ya. Ah don' mind.” He assured, coming over to me and lifting my shirt over my head.

“A-Are you sure? If we don't say something we might not be able to change later...” I pointed out, and he simply shrugged.

“Ah've slep' with ya 'fore.” He replied, and I sighed, nodding, and taking my pants off, leaving me in my underwear. Truth be told, I was too tired to put on pajamas, let alone venture back to the front counter. I let him pull me into the bed, the dull light coming from behind the curtains allowing me to see well enough to make my way without tripping. I flopped into bed, then rolled over to make room for Su-San, who pulled the fluffy comforter over us, then let his hand rest on top of my tummy. I blushed, thankful that the scant light would prevent Su-San from seeing it. He gently pulled me closer, till my hip met his, and I was flush against his body. I felt my face heat even more, and Su-San's hot breath on my cheek wasn't helping in the slightest.

I laid there, my mind frazzled, wanting to sleep, but now much too excited to relax. I was didn't move, afraid he would let me go if I did. So I simply waited, wondering how long this could last.

“Yer stiff again.” He mumbled, and I jumped at the sound of his voice at my ear. “Ah wish ya wouldn' do tha'...” He continued, his other arm sliding under my head, now supporting it as opposed to the pillow, his fingers tousling my hair.

“I-I'm sorry... I just... I'm not really sure... What to think of... This...” I admitted, wondering if I had overstepped a boundary. He drew a breath, and held it, then slowly released it, the air warm on my cheek.

“Ah... Ah don' really know either... Jus' wan' ta hol' ya.” He whispered, tightening his hold a bit. “Ah... Ah can stop if ya don' like i'...” He added, but I shook my head.

“No... I don't mind.” I decided, rolling over and snuggling up. Hell, if he wanted to cuddle,

who was I to deny him? He loosened up, letting me get comfortable, then squeezed yet again. I smiled, taking in a deep breath, clearly able to smell Su-San, pressed so close to his collarbone. My nose brushed against the hollow between the two bones, and I sighed quietly. "Fin?"

"Sorry... It's just... I envy your future wife...Husband?" I said absently, adding on the husband after recalling that Su-San was gay.

"W-Wha'?" He asked, the confusion clear in his voice. I simply chuckled.

"Whoever they are, they're lucky. They get to have all of your love, and they get to cuddle with you like this every night..." I explained, nodding off slowly. Su-San was silent, so I figured he agreed. All I remember before I fell asleep was his voice, whispering, only the word love making its way to my ears.

-.-.+-.-.-

I woke the next day to knocking, and realised that I was in bed alone. I pouted to myself momentarily, wondering where Su-San had gone. But the knock sounded again, and I got out of bed with a groan.

"Tino? Are you guys in there or not?" Mathias called from the other side of the door.

"Hold on, I'm coming." I called back, and didn't miss the immature snickers. I opened the door and Found Lukas and Mathias waiting. I watched as both of their eyes widened at the sight of me. I cocked my head in confusion, looking myself over. I could see nothing amiss... Oh, my hair? I quickly tried to flatten it, blushing.

"S-Sorry, I know it's a disaster in the morning... Is it really that bad?" I asked, but the both just kept staring. Lukas gained his senses first, needless to say.

"Tino... That's not what surprised us... Where are your clothes?" He asked. I looked down, and realised I was still in my underwear. I flushed further, trying to cover myself the best I could with just my arms at my disposal.

"Paska! (1) Sorry, I completely forgot! One sec!" I apologized, searching for something to put on. Of course, Su-San decided to join the party, opening the door, seeming surprised to see Mathias and Lukas.

"...Ah brough' ya some breakfas'..." He said simply, putting the food on the small table in our room. I smiled appreciatively, calming down now that I had some coverage. "Why do ya have mah shir' on?" He asked, and I scratched the back of my head awkwardly.

"I kind of forgot that I was only wearing my underwear... And I answered the door... It was the first thing I could grab... Sorry?" I tried, and he came to ruffle my hair.

"S'okej, I don' mind." He assured me, and I smiled. Mathias and Lukas just watched, at least at first. Then Mathias opened that stupid mouth of his.

"So... Did you two fuck last night or something?" He asked bluntly, to which Lukas elbowed him harshly in the ribs. "Ow! What? Come on, you're thinking the same thing!" He exclaimed. I must say, I was terribly red at that point, trying not to pass out from all the blood rushing upwards.

"NO! Of course not!" I protested, and Mathias smirked. "W-We just... We were too tired for Pajamas... And... Um... We're both guys?" I tried, and Lukas scoffed.

"Tino, that only works for straight guys." He pointed out, and I pouted.

"W-Well... I-I..."

"Tino, we're kidding, we know you didn't. Calm down." Lukas said, and I huffed, annoyed at being teased. "Anyway, where is your other bed?" He asked, gesturing to our single bed room.

"Oh... We wondered the same thing, actually... I guess they accidentally gave us a single?"

"And you didn't go and ask for a room change?"

“W-Well, it's not like we haven't slept together before...” I reiterated, using Su-San's words to my advantage. Lukas just shook his head.

“Whatever. After you guys eat, do you want to go out? Mathias wants to go to the zoo, and I dread the thought of going alone...” He said, earning a pout from Mathias. I smiled.

“Sure, I'm up for it. Su-San?” I asked, turning to look at him. He nodded.

“Alright then, I'll see you two in a bit. Mathias and I are going to go get something to eat as well. Meet you back here in about half an hour?” Lukas inquired, and I nodded.

“See you then.” I promised.

After they left, I sat down at the small table, Su-San across from me, and stared picking at what he had brought for me to eat. Some bagels, fruit, normal hotel food.

“Sorry Ah can' cook fer ya... No ki'chen...” He apologized, but I shook my head, sticking a bite of bagel that I had just smeared cream cheese on into my mouth.

“No, it's alright. It'll just make it taste that much better when we get home.” I said, smiling. He nodded, eating his own share. “Oh... That's right... I kind of fell asleep while you were talking last night... What was the last thing you said?” I asked, only remembering the word love, wondering what the rest of it had been.

“O-Oh... Um... Ah didn' say anythin' after ya... Ya mus' 'ave been dreamin'.” He said, his hesitation giving away his dishonesty. But I decided to let it go, finishing my breakfast.

Chapter End Notes

Told you something RANDOM was going to happen. Bet you weren't expecting that, huh? Oh, and I'm still waiting for someone to figure out the weird pairing of which I speak... It should be becoming slowly more obvious.

More cuddle time? I'm apparently very much in the cuddling mood here lately... Hmm...

They are definitely making progress now, yes? I hope everyone can see it!

AND TINO! So much fail! He totally missed the confession!

Translation of random Finnish curse:

(1): Paska – Finnish equivalent of shit.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 26

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

After breakfast, we got dressed, Lukas and Mathias joined us a few minutes later, and off we went. As we were leaving the hotel, Mr. Raimondo handed us a lanyard with a tag attached. He explained that this would get us into the places that the school had planned for us to go. On the back there was a list of all of these places. Lucky for us, the zoo was among them. I was surprised to learn that most things in Faiacre were within walking distance of each other, and if they weren't there were buses to take you. We walked for fifteen minutes before reaching the zoo. To be honest, up to that point, I had been doing my very best to conceal my excitement. I LOVE going to the zoo, seeing all of the animals that I wouldn't get a chance to otherwise. We showed our tags to the man at the entrance, and he waved us through. I giggled, very much ready to go, and Su-San had to grab my hand to keep me from running off.

“Come on, come on, come on!” I urged, pulling him forward, or at least trying to. (This obviously wasn't very effective, considering the size difference.) He held me firmly in place, waiting for Mathias and Lukas to tell us how this was going to work. Lukas handed me a map that he had gotten from the ticket gate.

“Where do you want to go Tino? Mathias wants to see bears first.” Lukas asked, and I quickly unfolded the map and looked at what animals were offered. I gasped when my eyes read a certain word, and I pointed, excited.

“PENGUINS!” I practically screamed, shoving the map in Su-San's face, demanding that he look and confirm this. He took it from my hands, pulling it away from his face. He looked for a moment, then nodded. I turned to Lukas, practically jumping up and down. “I want to see the penguins! So much! Please Lukas?” I asked, doing my best to make puppy dog eyes.

“What? But we're going to go see the bears first! He already said so! Right babe?” Mathias piped in, looking to his boyfriend for support. Lukas sighed, then addressed Su-San.

“Well, while I was prepared for Mathias, I hadn't expected Tino to revert into a five year old. I guess we'll have to split up.” He said, acting as though I couldn't hear him. Su-San nodded, taking my hand and leading me away. “I guess we'll run into each other sooner or later. You two have fun.” He called as he let Mathias lead him in the opposite direction. Though I was sad to see him go, I was too excited about penguins and alone time with Su-San to let it really get me down. Being directionally challenged (seriously, I base my entire life on intuition, going where my feet take me. If that isn't the right place, well, too bad for me.) I allowed Su-San to lead me to our destination. I'd never seen a real life penguin before, but they are my FAVORITE animal. EVER. To think that I would be able to see a real one was blowing my mind, and revving up my excitement.

It was pretty easy to spot, as it was actually a building as opposed to an enclosure like the other animals had. Not to mention the large penguin statues outside... (There were also puffins, but I wasn't here for them.) But hei, we'll pretend I could tell from the former, okei? I grinned stupidly, practically jumping up and down with excitement. I turned to Su-San, silently asking if this was really happening, and he nodded in confirmation, letting me pull him the rest of the way. We stood in front of the doors, which had a warning on them.

TEMPERATURE KEPT AT 45-50 DEGREES. BE PREPARED FOR TEMPERATURE

CHANGE.

I looked at it, a bit surprised, but then happy to know that they were being kept in an environment even a little similar to their homes. I'm sure they preferred this to being made to sit out in the heat all day. I pushed the door open, and gasped as the cold air hit me. I guess I wasn't prepared for the temperature change after all... Still, I braved it, and the fishy smell. Anything for penguins!

There were a few people ahead of us, milling about, blocking my way, so I couldn't see them yet. So, trying to keep myself from screaming curses at people, I looked around. The interior was designed to look like a cave, and the lighting was a bit dim, but it set a nice mood. I could hear water, and the gawks of penguins, but I still couldn't see them. Still, the people were moving pretty quickly, obviously not as obsessed as I was. I wished I could shove them all out of the way, tell them all to move, force them all out so I could have the whole place to myself. Alas, an average sized Finn isn't exactly a force to be reckoned with. But finally, I got far enough to see my first penguin.

All bets were off.

I was too excited for all this waiting. I shoved a fat tourist out of the way, succeeding in getting to the front, and I gasped as I took in the massive group of penguins huddled on a rock. I smiled, my face hurting from how big it was, and gazed adoringly. They were so cute up close, in person! I wanted to reach out and pick one up, to cuddle it, to take it home and love it forever. Unfortunately, there was a zoo personnel right next to me, watching me, daring me to try. I pouted, but regained my previous joy when one dove into the tank and swam up right next to me. I gasped, bending down to its height, then giggled, and finally turned to share my excitement with Su-San. But to my surprise, he wasn't at my side. I stood back up, looking left and right, wondering where he could have gone. Did he get tired of the crowd, and leave? Was he tired of me?

"Fin!" I heard him call, and my head snapped to the left. I found him, still trying to push his way past the fat tourist from earlier. I breathed a sigh of relief, and pushed back towards him, grabbing his hand and pulling him through. Back to my place in front of the tank, I offered him a chuckle.

"How does someone as big as you need help getting through a crowd?" I asked, bending back down to look inside the water tank, now containing about half the penguins from the rock.

"Ah don' like pushin' people. They're more likely ta pick a figh' wi' me than ya." He pointed out, and I shook my head.

"It's the opposite! People are scared of you! You're huge! You've always been like that too, even in kindergarten..." I trailed, blushing a bit as, instead of letting it go, Su-San laced his fingers with mine. I guess he didn't want to lose me in the crowd again.

"Sorry..." He mumbled, directing his attention to the tank.

"Huh? Why are you sorry? Oh! I don't think you're scary! Not anymore! Maybe for the first month... But then I figured out that you were actually just a shy sweetie, and I wasn't afraid anymore!" I explained, giving his hand a squeeze for emphasis, then watching the penguins some more. He seemed content with my answer, watching them as well.

I would gasp and giggle frequently, finding penguin antics absolutely adorable, and I would have been content to sit and watch them all day. But I could tell Su-San was getting bored, so I stood up, pulling him with me. My knees protested, and I had to stretch before moving again. I gave him an apologetic smile, walking towards the exit.

"Sorry... I didn't mean to stay here so long... They were just so cute!" I explained, working my way through the crowd. He shook his head, walking faster to keep up with me. We had to pass the puffins to get out, and I did them the courtesy of looking before I left. They were

cute enough, but not as much as penguins! I was about to go through the doors, when I heard a voice call my name.

“T-Tino!” I turned around, finding Emil's roommate... Xiao, was it? Yeah, that sounds right.

“Oh, hi! Are you here with Emil?” I asked.

“...Kind of...” He replied. I gave him a look, and he simply pointed. I saw a head of whitish blonde hair in front of the Puffin tank, clearly labeling him as Emil. “He... He's been staring at them since we got here...” Xiao explained, frowning.

“Oh? Um, okei, I'll go talk to him real fast.” I offered, walking over to Emil, leaving Su-San with Xiao. I tried to get his attention by calling his name, then my hand on his shoulder when he didn't respond. He gave me a glance, then returned to looking at the puffins. I huffed, exasperated, and hoped I hadn't been like that with the penguins.

“Emil... Hei!” I called, but he paid me no mind. “Emil! Xiao is worried about you!” I hissed. He finally turned my way, sighing.

“I-I know... But Tino... I WANT one.” He said, pointing to the puffins. I stared, expecting him to break into laughter, or say 'just kidding' or something of the like. But he did not. “I almost had one, but then the zoo guy yelled at me, and told me to put him down...” He explained sadly. I was incredulous.

“Of course he yelled at you! You can't just steal a puffin!” I exclaimed.

“I know... But...” He tried again, staring at one longingly. I groaned, not sure what I was supposed to do in this situation. He had such a mature way of being childish. Quiet, yet stubborn. I was about to go tell Su-San that we would have to find Lukas, but Xiao came back over. He came in front of Emil, and dropped something into his hands. Emil seemed surprised, and looked down to see what he had just received. I looked too. In Emil's hands was a stuffed puffin, about the size of a real one, with a cute little bow tie around his neck. I thought the gesture was cute, but Emil was obviously quite moved. He hugged the puffin, nuzzling it like it was his most prized possession. Then he hugged Xiao, which baffled me. Emil wasn't one for showing affection. It was rare for even Lukas to get a hug from the little Iclander. But he hugged Xiao, then the puffin again.

“T-Thank you...” He mumbled, and Xiao nodded, seeming calm, but I could see a little flush on his cheeks. So that's how it is... It felt a bit strange... Watching them felt like watching the love life of someone much younger than you, less experienced, like when you watch a movie. But they were only a year behind us, so the feeling was a bit misplaced. I shrugged it off, returning to Su-San's side. We watched as the two finally left the building, and we followed suit a bit afterward.

I gasped all over again when I realised that the exit of the penguin building went through a gift shop devoted to penguins and puffins. So this is where Xiao had gotten it... I looked around longingly, angry at myself for not having brought my wallet. Su-San took my hand and pulled me out, much to my sorrow.

“Suuuu-San! Why am I such an idiot? So many penguins, and I can't buy one! Remind me to grab my wallet before we go anywhere else?” I plead, and he nodded, leading me away from the penguin building. He took me to see some wolves, and I felt better after that. I love wolves almost as much as penguins, so it was a nice distraction. I asked to go see meerkats next, and he agreed, showing me the way. I chuckled as they popped out of the ground and ran around. They were even cuter than the ones from that Animal Planet show! He asked me where I wanted to go next, but I realised that we had only seen things that I wanted to see. I felt bad, and shook my head.

“Uh-uh. What do YOU want to see?” I demanded, taking the map from him. He seemed a bit surprised, but then gave me the smallest of smiles. (Which, for Su-San, is practically a grin.)

“...Ah wan' to go see the ca's.” He admitted, and I nodded, looking at the map and locating the big cat enclosure. I furrowed my brows in concentration as I tried to figure how to get there from here, and, upon figuring out a route in my head, I lead him onward.

About ten minutes later, I realised I had gotten us lost. We had just past some Giraffes, which were NOT on the way to the cats. I groaned internally, but didn't let on that I had no idea where we were going. Maybe if we walked far enough, we would end up where we were supposed to be. We passed an elephant, then some gazelles, and, looking at the map, I found we were going in the complete wrong direction. If we kept this way, we would be coming to the bears. But the path would loop around after that, so we could still get there... It would just take us through the rest of the zoo first.

“Fin...” I heard Su-San call to me, and I quickly closed the map, hoping he hadn't seen how wrong I had been. I turned, already on the verge of breaking down and admitting that I had no idea what I was doing, but he didn't seem angry. Actually, he wasn't even looking at me. I followed his line of sight, wondering what had distracted him. And what I found was... A donkey...

“W-What? What is THAT doing here?” I asked, and he shrugged his shoulders.

“Dunno.” He admitted. I looked around for a plaque that would explain this. All of the other animals had one, saying what they were and where they came from. Perhaps this was a special donkey, from like, china... Or something. I located the plaque, and began reading it out loud to Su-San.

“It says: Ass – Commonly known as Donkey. From Mexico. That's all it says...” I finished, looking back up at it. Su-San seemed just as confused by this. A donkey was such a terribly common animal... It seemed misplaced with all of these exotic animals around it. We both shook it off, leaving the donkey to its devices.

“Well, that was weird...” I said, and Su-San nodded, taking my hand.

“Ja.” He agreed, matching his pace to mine. I blushed, but played it off as though I wasn't surprised by the show of affection. The penguin place had been busy, so I could excuse the hand holding as simply not wanting to get separated, but there was plenty of open space out on the path. Maybe he just didn't want me to run off. We passed a few more animals, and then we were on the path that led to the bears. We looked at them, and I pointed out how scary it would be if they weren't on the other side of the fence. Especially that grizzly... He was huge! But Su-San said I could probably take him in a wrestling match, to which I just chuckled, and we moved on. We were passing a bird cage, when Su-San finally brought up what I had expected ages ago.

“Fin, Ah though' we were goin' to see the ca's...” He mumbled, and I flushed.

“U-Um... We are... I just, um... Well... I kind of got a little lost...” I admitted, hanging in my head in defeat. I heard a little chuckle, which put my heart at ease and sped it up all at once, and he pulled me over to a bench. After sitting down himself, he pulled me down, and I almost landed on top of him, but managed to find the bench.

“S-Su-San?” I tried, looking up at him. He offered no hint of what he was thinking, simply wrapping an arm around my shoulders.

“Tire'. Le's res' for a bi'.” He replied, and I smiled. I'm sure he wasn't tired, but he was always good at figuring out when I was. I nodded, resting my head on his shoulder.

“Sorry for getting lost... You know how I am with maps...”

“Ja. Ah knew ya were los'. S'okej. Fun.” He assured, making me laugh.

“I had a feeling you knew. Thanks for not being angry.”

“Can' be angry at ya.” He pulled me a bit closer, giving me a squeeze. I smiled, content, not wanting the moment to end, but knowing it had to. We rested for a few minutes, then he got

up, and pulled me to my feet.

"It's this way." He informed me, and I chuckled, letting him take the lead again. Sure enough, he got us there. I pouted for a minute, wondering how it could be so easy for him, but smiled again as I saw the tiger. He was pretty big, and I watched him prowls around for a while before Su-San pulled me along. He completely bypassed a panther, and I realised that he must have a certain cat in mind. I let him lead me to the largest enclosure in the area, and looked in. I can't say that I was surprised to find a lion on the other side, watching the people watching him. I looked at Su-San, who was staring at the lion pretty hard. I remembered that lions had always been his favorite animals, so it was no surprise that he was so entranced. I turned back to the lion, and watched him as well.

Thinking on it, Su-San was kind of like a lion, in a strange way. He was cool, calm, level headed. And yet, should the situation call for it, he could be ferocious, even dangerous to the person on the other end. Francis had been sent to the nurse plenty of times after Su-San had finished with him. (It was always justified though, usually defending me.) Still, he was affectionate, quiet, even a little shy. I smiled a bit, giving his hand a squeeze. He looked at me as I did so, then down to our hands, then back to the lion. After a few more minutes, he pulled me away, back towards the entrance.

"Sorry." He muttered, and I gave him a look.

"Huh? What for?"

"Ah ma'e ya stay there for a lon' time..." He replied, frowning.

"Oh, whatever! We stayed with the penguins a lot longer!" I exclaimed, and he shrugged.

"Ya like penguins."

"And you like Lions!"

"Hey you two." Lukas cut in, and I jumped.

"O-Oh, hei! I guess we really did run into you guys again!" I said, laughing. He nodded, pointing at Mathias.

"We didn't really see anything BUT bears. This idiot kept insisting we go back every five minutes. I got to see some giraffes for a bit. That's about it. Are you two ready to go?" He asked, and I nodded.

"Wai'." Su-San cut in, and I looked to him. He let go of my hand, and backed up a bit.

"Ba'room. Be righ' back." He explained, running off. I watched him go, then turned back to Lukas.

"Okei, well, I guess we aren't ready to go..."

"How long have you two been holding hands?" Lukas demanded, and I flinched.

"U-Um... Since the penguin house..."

"...Wasn't that the first place you went?"

"...Maybe..."

"...Okay, are you sure you two didn't fuck last night?" He asked, and I flushed.

"O-Of course not! Don't tease me!" I yelled, making him smirk.

"Yeah yeah. I still don't see why you two insist on pretending you aren't a couple."

"We're not! We're just friends!"

"Tino, we've been through this. Friends don't hold hands, let alone all the other things you two do."

"He's right!" Mathias cut in, grinning. I scowled, hating this double team thing.

"W-Well... We're... We're differe..." I was cut off by a hand on my shoulder. I looked over to see who it was, and found none other than Su-San. I turned around, hoping he hadn't heard anything. I was about to open my mouth to attempt an explanation, when I felt something in my hands. Something fuzzy. I looked down, and found a penguin, and my face lit up.

“Oh my gosh! You got me one? Su-San! You're amazing!” I cried, giving him a huge hug. He returned it, then ruffled my hair. “So it must have been your idea to Emil the puffin!” I realised, and he nodded. “That was sweet of you.” I said, giving him a smile. He shrugged, following behind Lukas and Mathias, who had started heading out.

“Xiao aske' me wha' to do, so Ah tol' 'im wha' Ah woul' do.” He explained.

“Well, Emil seemed to like it, so I think you gave some good advice!” I added. He nodded in agreement, then we walked in silence for a bit, until we got to the entrance.

“Okay, well, It's only a little after two... Do you two have another place in mind?” Lukas asked, slowing down a bit to match pace with us. I thought about it, shaking my head.

“Not really. You two?” I asked, and Lukas nodded.

“Yeah, Mathias want to take me on a date, actually. Says he has everything planned... I was hoping you two had somewhere you could go?”

“Oh! Of course! We can figure something out! No need to worry about us!” I gushed quickly. He gave me a small smile.

“Thanks Tino. I'll see you guys later. If you run into Emil again, could you tell him where I am?”

“Sure! See you.” I agreed, waving him off. Mathias tugged him down a street, and then turned a corner, and they were gone. I chuckled at Mathias' excitement, looking up at Su-San.

“It was sweet of Mathias to plan a date for him.” I said, and Su-San nodded in agreement.

“Well, what are we going to do?” I asked, walking down the street in a random direction.

“Where'ver ya wan' to.”

Chapter End Notes

First fun thing, done! Onto the next! Lolz, Seems Su-San is getting a bit... bolder here lately. Well, I guess that's improvement. I've got to finish this fic before I die...

Someday... (So many chapters already! Seriously, the most I've ever had before was ten, and they were like a page each, so yeah.)

Well, not too much more to say.

Oh, right, I meant to say in the last chapter, but forgot: Faiacre, if you couldn't guess, doesn't exist. Completely made up. Don't try to find it.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 27

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

We made a quick trip back to the hotel, where I retrieved my previously forgotten wallet, then randomly selected a destination from the back of our tags. Turns out we randomly picked a museum. I made a face, never having been particularly interested in history, but Su-San seemed to be a little excited, so I went along with it. We had to catch the bus for this one, but it wasn't a very long trip. The bus dropped us off right in front of the building, and we walked up the short pathway. He opened the large door, and waited for me to step through before letting it close behind us. It was a pleasant temperature inside, and I breathed a sigh of relief, the heat from the bus having gotten to me.

We spotted a small group of people, and made the silent agreement to follow them, as they seemed to know what they were doing. They walked up to the counter and paid for their admission tickets. Su-San and I simply showed the man running the counter our tags, and he told us to go ahead and walk around as we pleased. I thanked him, and then we followed some arrows telling us that there would be European exhibits if we turned right.

We found the aforementioned exhibits, which began in France. I scrunched my nose up in disgust, my overall opinion of all things French having been ruined early on by Francis. Su-San seemed equally perturbed, so we quickly walked through, into England.

This was an improvement, but still not very exciting. Everything was either Medieval, or Victorian, which meant armor or God. It was more interesting to watch as Su-San examined some of the things in the room. His face would scrunch up in concentration, and his face would relax after reading the information card, clearly satisfying his curiosity. After seeing what he wanted to, he gestured that we could move to the next room.

This room was part of the England exhibit, but it consisted specifically of clothes worn over the ages. This caught my interest more than the paintings and armor had. I marveled at the craftsmanship of the frocks and gowns, Su-San by my side, commenting occasionally.

Finally, towards the end, there was one more dress that caught my attention. It was a Victorian wedding dress, and it was, needless to say, beautiful, even if it was clearly ancient. The lace was beautifully crafted, sewn in as a lovely accent to the rest of the gown, which was pure white. (Or at least, I could tell it used to be, as it was now an aged cream color. I admired it, wondering what it must feel like to be married in such a beautiful garment. I saw Su-San look from me to the dress out of the corner of my eye. I turned and gave him a questioning look. He scratched the back of his head, like whatever he had just been thinking about was making him feel awkward.

“Su-San?” I inquired. If I wasn't mistaken, his cheeks were looking a bit... Pink.

“...S'jus'... Ya woul' look pretty in i'.” He explained, nodding his head to the dress. It took me a moment to process it, but I flushed as soon as I did.

“Oh, come on, it's not nice to tease.” I scolded, trying to laugh it off.

“Ah'm no' teasin'.” He replied. I had been afraid of that.

“But... Su-San, I'm a boy...” I reminded him.

“Ja. Yer still pretty.” He pointed out. My mouth opened to spit out a retort, but I had none, so I closed it again. Sensing his victory, Su-San took my hand, his win apparently giving him confidence. I blushed harder, but didn't pull my hand away, allowing him to lead me into the

next room.

Su-San had gotten a lot more... Affectionate since we had arrived in Faiacre. Had Lukas been right? Maybe I should start taking this seriously... But did I have the confidence to believe it? But really, saying that we're just friends is slowly getting more unbelievable. And I was having a harder time coming up with excuses for his actions. This hand holding, for instance. The museum wasn't crowded, nor would it be easy to lose me, so there was no need to hold my hand. The only thing I could chalk it up to was that he WANTED to hold my hand. But, again, the voice in the back of my mind was telling me not to get so full of myself. Why would Su-San ever be interested in me? There had to be some explanation for this, though I could think of none.

We moved on, the next exhibit being Italy. The paintings on the walls were beautiful, putting any art skills I had to shame. Still, it was a nice display, the models of Italian cities carefully and artfully crafted. In the clothes room, we found more frocks, these ones simpler than those of England. There were also Tunics, which looked horribly comfortable. We moved on, the next room holding what was obviously Spain.

I liked this more; It was brighter, the clothes in vibrant shades of red, the paintings on the wall loud. In the middle of the room was a huge sculpture of a tall, skinny man on a horse, and a short, fat man on a donkey. I looked at it, wondering why something so ridiculous was in the middle of an otherwise coordinated, exciting display. Su-San did the same, then it seemed to dawn on him.

"on Quixote. 'e's everywhere." He explained. I looked at the statue again, still not understanding it. I was pretty sure I had heard of Don Quixote before, but I wasn't sure where. I shrugged it off, and was about to move on to the next area, when I heard some voices coming down the hallway. I recognized one as one of the Italian boys from my class. (It sounded angry, so Romano.) I didn't recognize the second voice.

"Vamos Romano, el siguiente es España!"

"No hables pendejo! Ya te he oído las primeras cincuenta veces!"

"Awww, Roma, tu español está se mejorando!"

"Cállate, Bastard!"

They finally rounded the corner, and came in. Both saw us, and quieted down. I finally figured out who the other one was, after I saw his face. He was the Spanish boy that had been Serenading Romano on the first day, much to Romano's displeasure. I watched as Romano yanked his hand out of the Spanish guy's, trying to act like he hadn't been holding it. I smiled, trying to be friendly, and the Spaniard returned it.

"Hola! I'm Antonio. We go to school together?" He asked, eying the tag around my neck.

"Y-Yeah. Nice to meet you. My name is Tino." I replied, trying not to be awkward, and failing.

"And this is Roma..."

"He's in my class, fucking idiot. He knows who I am!" Romano snapped, glaring at the older boy.

"Oh, si, that's right. And the scary one is... Berwald, if I remember right." He said, though he didn't sound very scared. Su-San nodded, taking my hand and pulling me a little closer. I looked up at him curiously, and was a bit surprised to see that his glare was actually for real. I wondered why, as Antonio was only being friendly, but as I turned to look back to the Spaniard, I realised that someone else had just entered the room.

"Tooooooni! I was wondering where you had gone. Not that I was worried or anything, that wouldn't be very awesome, but I finally found a bar, and I got in, and the beer isn't half bad, still not good enough for the awesome me, but better than nothing! So come on!" I looked at

the speaker, and was a bit shocked to find out he was... Albino. Of all the people I could meet at a museum and albino... Oh, excuse me, a DRUNK, German Albino. So this had to be the infamous Gilbert that I had heard so much about. The kid so obnoxious that even Mathias couldn't stand him. I could see how he earned this reputation, just listening to him scream all of his words at poor Antonio was enough to give me a headache. Su-San pulled me closer yet again, this time so I was flush against his side, his arm around my shoulders.

"Hey, who's this kid?" He asked, suddenly noticing me. "Why's such a cute kid hanging out with this scary bastard?" He demanded, squinting up at Su-San, who glared down at him. After looking confused for a moment, he grinned, looking back at me. "Well kid, want to come and get your drink on with the awesome me? It'll be better than hanging out with this giant-ass fag-troll." He pointed out. I gaped for a moment, not believing that I had just heard this, nor that Su-San wasn't punching him in the face for what he just said. And then I decided: If he won't stand up for himself, I sure as hell will.

I launched myself at him, wrapping my arms around his middle, effectively knocking him off his feet. He was obviously surprised, but I didn't give him a chance to contemplate his situation, landing a punch to his face, then another. He regained his senses, and blocked my next one with his arms, then flipped us over so that he was on top, and tried to get a hit on me, but I quickly reversed the positions yet again, punching before he could block me. I tried again, but he blocked my attempt, and scrambled out from under me, standing up, and squaring off. I didn't hesitate to tackle him again, but this time he braced himself, and didn't fall. Seeing as my attack was ineffective, I switched to kicking, my leg hitting his knee and causing it to bend. He stumbled, but straightened back up, and tried to punch me again. He grazed my cheek this time, but it was barely enough to make it sting. I punched him again, then swung my leg for another kick, but my leg never connected. My body was lifted off the ground and pulled back, much to my protest. I flailed, trying to escape and attack him again, but the arms that had lifted me did not relent.

"TINO! Calm 'own!"

I struggled, though not as hard, wondering who was talking to me.

"It's alright, jus' calm 'own!" Again, the voice. Reality started to fall back in place, and I realised that it was Su-San calling my name, that I had just beaten the shit out of a peer. I stopped struggling, and Su-San wrapped his arms around my torso, squeezing me to him. I looked to see what had become of Gilbert. He too was being held, by Feleciano's boyfriend. I heard some German being exchanged between them, but even if I spoke German, I wouldn't be able to tell you what they said. I was slowly starting to recede into myself, as I do when I'm in a particularly stressful situation. Still, I took stock of the damage I'd done to Gilbert. His eye was going to be turning black soon, and his nose was bleeding, but he was still struggling, so he obviously wasn't injured too badly. I heard Feleciano's boyfriend address Su-San, and then we parted ways, Su-San carrying my now limp body. He took us to the bus stop and sat down, sitting me on his lap, practically cradling me. I groaned, burying my face in his chest.

"I'm sorry." I whispered. He ruffled my hair, pulling my head closer to his chest. "I... I don't really know what I was thinking... I just... He called you such awful names, I couldn't..."

"S'okej, ya don' have ta 'splain yerself. Ah understan'." He assured, letting his face fall, his nose burying itself in my hair. "Are ya okej? He didn' hi' ya, did he?" He asked, and I shook my head. "Goo'. Can ya walk? Bus's 'ere." He asked, and I answered by pulling away and standing up. Still, he wrapped an arm around my waist, supporting my movements, just in case.

We got off the bus about a block away from the hotel, and began the walk back. I was

dreading seeing Mr. Raimondo, knowing I was in trouble, and scared that I would be sent back early.

“Hei, Su-San, will they send me back early? But all of our teachers are gone... Would I have to go to a different class until you all got back?” I asked, but ended up rambling. He gave me a look.

“Why woul' ya be sen' back?” He asked. It was my turn to give him a look.

“I just beat someone up! I'm sure I'm about to be in a lot of trouble!” I replied, but he shook his head.

“Didn' ya 'ear Ludwig? They aren' goin' ta say anythin' as long as we don'.” He informed, and I gasped.

“R-Really?”

“Ja. If he tol', he'd be in trouble too.” Su-San pointed out, and I realised the truth of his words.

“S-So, I'm not in trouble?” I asked, and he reiterated what he had just said. I breathed a sigh of relief just as we came to the hotel's entrance. As he said, Mr. Raimondo didn't say anything as we walked by, and we made our way to our room. I went to sit on the bed, and Su-San got a glass of water for me. He handed it to me, then sat down next to me, rubbing the small of my back. I took a drink, then leaned into Su-San, letting my eyes close.

“Ya doin' okej?” He asked, taking the cup from me and setting on the bedside table.

“I think so. I just... I don't understand how you could just stand there and let him say such awful things about you...” I confided.

“He's drunk. An' i's no' like he was wrong.” He admitted. I opened my eyes and glared at him.

“No, He was definitely wrong! You aren't scary, and you aren't a troll, and it's just awful to call someone a fag, and...”

“Tino...”

“Sorry, I'm rambling. But it wasn't right of him to say those things, even if he WAS drunk. And it wasn't right of you to just let him say them, either!”

“So ya wante' me to bea' 'im up?”

“No! But you could have at least defended yourself! You would have defended me!” I pointed out.

“Bu' ya wouldn' 'ave defended yerself.” He retorted. I opened my mouth to argue, but he was right.

“Ooooh, that's not fair! This isn't about me!”

“Yes i' is. Yer the one who 'tacked 'im.”

“Because you didn't!”

“So ya really did wan' me to bea' 'im up.”

“No! Stop doing that! It isn't funny! I'm being serious here!” I cried, puffing my cheeks out, as I tend to do when I'm angry. His lips twitched into a small smile, and he poked one of my cheeks.

“Cute.” He said, and I blushed.

“S-Shut up! I-I'm angry, not cute!” I whined, pouting like a child. He chuckled lowly, ruffling my hair.

“Yer angry face is cute.”

“No fair! I've got to have at least one face that's scary!”

“Don' worry, all mah faces are scary, so Ah make up fer ya.”

“Oh? Alright, then I'll make all of your not-scary faces for you. Do we have a deal?”

“Ja.”

Then we both laughed. Like I've said before, we never fight. Even if I was on the verge of starting one, Su-San would always figure out a way to get on my good side again. I decided to overlook this one, crawling up into his lap and giving him a hug. He returned it, laying down, taking me with him. I giggled, resting my head on his collar.

"Hmm, you're comfy." I informed him.

"Yer warm." He informed me. I smiled, grabbing the covers that were lying at the end of the bed. (We're teenage boys, do you really think we made the bed?) I pulled them up, covering both of us.

"Let's take a nap, okei?" I asked, not waiting for an answer as I got comfortable again. He made a sound of affirmation, and I felt his arm move to take his glasses off and put them on the night stand. Then he shifted, laying on his side, using one arm to support my head. The other came to rest on my hip, and pulled me just a little closer. I flushed, but still smiled, pressing my nose to his chest, inhaling his scent. Being wrapped up in his arms was the best feeling in the world, and I couldn't even imagine my life if this wasn't part of it. But, as I thought about that, I realised that it was probably going to happen, likely pretty soon. Su-San is attractive, even if he scares most people. I'm sure he'd find someone sooner or later, and they'd get married, and then this... This wouldn't happen anymore. My heart dropped into my stomach, or whatever metaphor you want to use for the feeling of one's stomach demanding that it be emptied, even though you actually didn't need to throw up in the first place. I sighed, trying to banish the thought from my mind.

"Fin? Ya okej?"

"Mhm, I'm fine." I replied, scooting closer. He lifted his arm a bit so I could move, then let it fall back to my hip. I snuggled up, wrapping an arm around his chest. "...I'm going to miss you..." I whispered, not really meaning to say it out loud at all.

"Hmm?" I groaned internally, wishing I had kept my mouth shut.

"I...It's just... Someday we won't be able to do this..." I admitted.

"...Why no'?" He asked, sounding truly puzzled. I pulled back a little to give him an incredulous look.

"Because! You'll get married or something, and you'll probably move away, and You can't very well cuddle with another guy if you're married, and..."

"Tino... Ah'm no' goin' to marry any'ne tha' isn'..." He was cut off by a knock at the door, causing both of us to turn our heads in that direction.

"Tino? Berwald? Are you two in there?" It was Lukas, and I was pretty sure I heard Mathias as well. I was a bit puzzled. Surely their date wasn't over yet... But still, I got up and opened the door. On the other side, I found a very annoyed looking Lukas, and a pouting Mathias.

"You guys are already back?" I asked, tilting my head in confusion. Lukas shot a glare Mathias' way.

"Yes. This idiot forgot his wallet, so our reservation was canceled." He explained.

"I'm sorry babe! Tino forgot his wallet today too!" He pointed out.

"Yes, but Tino didn't get me excited to actually be going out on a nice, high class date, and then shoot down all of my hopes by being a completely retarded idiot." Lukas snapped. I flinched, once again glad that it was very rare for Lukas to insult me. Mathias pouted even harder at his boyfriend's words.

"...I'm sorry..." Was all he said. Lukas just sighed.

"Mind if we hang out for a bit?" He asked me, and I shook my head, stepping out of the doorway, allowing both to enter. Lukas looked around our small room, then settled on the floor. Or rather, he glared at Mathias until he sat on the floor, then claimed his lap. I smiled, going to sit on the bed. Su-San had retrieved his glasses, and uncovered himself, and was

now sitting cross legged on the bed. I sat down next to him, pulling my knees up to my chest and wrapping my arms around them.

“Well, what did you two do while we were gone? Or were you just hanging out here?” Lukas asked. I laughed awkwardly, not sure if I wanted to get into the details of the fight. But Su-San beat me to it.

“We wen' to the museum. Tino bea' the shi' ou' of Gilbert.”

The room was quite for a moment, while Lukas and Mathias looked at me with doubt in their eyes, obviously waiting for a “just kidding.” When it didn't come, they both started laughing. (Mathias' was, as usual, loud and obnoxious, while Lukas' was more of a chuckle.)

“Seriously? That's great! I was wondering when it was going to happen this year! But who would have expected it to be Tino?” Mathias barked, giving me a thumbs up.

“It's happened before?” I asked.

“Of course it has. He pisses almost the entire human race off. He's only got two friends, and even they can't stand him some time. Antonio broke his wrist punching him a few years ago. They both had to go to the hospital.” Lukas informed me, and I gasped.

“Really? That's awful!”

“Says the guy that apparently just beat him up...”

“I... He was picking on Su-San, so I...”

“Oh, so he was drunk?” Lukas cut in.

“Um, yoo.” I admitted, feeling guiltier by the second.

“That sounds like him. He likes his beer. Well, don't feel bad. I'm sure the entire school will be thanking you when word gets around.” Lukas assured.

“I hope word doesn't get around... I don't want to be 'that kid that beats people up'.” They laughed at me. They asked for some details, which I reluctantly gave, then Mathias' stomach growled, and we agreed that it was time to go and get something to eat. We looked at a brochure that was provided with the room, and decided on an Italian restaurant about three blocks away.

We took our time walking there, seeing as it was still pretty early. This said, it wasn't very busy, so we were seated immediately. After some chatter, and being joined by Emil and Xiao, who were walking by and saw us inside, we ordered our food, and ate. Of course, being me, I had to use the bathroom, so I excused myself. I was on the way back, when I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned, curious, and found Romano. I was surprised to see him, but I remembered that this was an Italian restaurant, and that he and his brother were probably eating here. He glared at me, then looked around, as if checking to make sure no one had seen us.

“...Could you come here a second?” He asked. I was starting to get a bit worried, but I nodded, and he led me to a corner. He looked around again. Was he going to beat me up? Take revenge for Gilbert? I really hoped not; I didn't want to fight Romano.

“Um... I wanted to... To... Fuck! I wanted to thank you!” He blurted, sounding angry. I was startled a moment, then I was confused.

“H-Huh? What for?” I asked, and he glared at the floor to his right.

“For... For getting rid of Gilbert earlier... I... I don't usually tell people, but... I'm dating that stupid Spanish bastard... And... Well, we haven't been able to go on a date... For a while... And Gil was about to ruin it... So... Thanks.” He finished, then stormed off. I watched him go, and saw him sit down next to Antonio, Feleciano and his boyfriend sitting across from them. I took a moment to process this, then returned to my own seat. Su-San gave me an anxious look, but I smiled at him, and he seemed to relax.

“What did Romano want?” Lukas asked. I shrugged, trying to play it off.

“Just wanted to talk about earlier. They were at the museum.” I explained. Lukas seemed satisfied with that, and began a conversation with Emil and Xiao instead. Su-San, however, didn't let it go so easily.

“...Wha' did he say to ya?” He demanded. I sighed.

“He... He thanked me. He was on a date with Antonio, and Gilbert was about to ruin it.” I elaborated. He accepted that, and brought his fork to my mouth. I opened up, and let him feed me some of whatever he had ordered. It was pretty tasty, and I smiled at him.

“Thanks. What is that?” I asked.

“Pasta.” He deadpanned. I rolled my eyes.

“You don't say. Well, whatever, I guess it doesn't matter, as long as you give me another bite. Oh, you can have some of mine too, if you want.” I offered, taking the bite he held up for me. We finished eating, and walked back to the hotel, parting ways to go to our respective rooms. Su-San told me to shower first, so I did so, then we traded. I decided to go ahead and crawl into bed, waiting for him there. But, as I should have expected, I started to doze off.

Within my semi-conscious state of mind, I vaguely recognized the sound of the water turning off, then a door opening, and footsteps. I felt the bed sink next to me, and a nearly nonexistent brushing of skin as he leaned across me to shut the lamp off and dispose of his glasses. Then I felt an arm around my waist, pulling me closer, flush up against him. I sighed quietly, content, and allowed my thoughts to fade, allowed myself to relish in sensation alone. I felt warm breath on the crown of my head, repeating frequently as he breathed, becoming steadier with the passing seconds. I was fading, further and further with each breath, my consciousness all but gone. The last thing I remembered was an almost inaudible whisper, so quiet that I may have just imagined it.

“Ah love ya.”

Chapter End Notes

Oooh, weren't expecting that, were you? Haha, Hi guys, what's up? Well, I was rereading the last chapter... SO MANY TYPOS! I have no idea what happened! I'm really sorry guys, and I hope this one isn't nearly as bad!

So, it seems like we're getting a little more familiar with other Hetalia characters. I hope you guys are enjoying that, because I am. Oh, right, poor Gil... Well, someone had to do it... All that bear-wrestling came in handy, eh Tino?

Alrighty, here is a translation of Spain and Romano's conversation! (courtesy of sarkastisk.korp.klo)

“Let's go Romano, next is Spain!

Shut up, asshole! I heard you the first fifty times!

Awww, Roma, your Spanish is getting better!

Shut up, Bastard!”

Thanks again, Hyvaa Huomenta, paiva, Iltaa, yota, whatever it may be wherever you may reside.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 28

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

By popular demand: Berwald's Interlude:

It was refreshing to see Tino so excited for something. It isn't that it's a rare occurrence, as he is incredibly easy to please him, but he usually doesn't express it so freely. He began packing for Faiacre days before we left, and kept asking what it was like, though none of us had ever been. He started to get impatient, watching the clock at school, going to bed earlier. When the day finally came, he had run himself ragged. I wanted to chuckle, he was so very childlike. After being so excited for an entire week, he was absolutely exhausted. I watched as his eyes seemed to get heavier and heavier with each new mode of transportation that we disembarked in. His endurance was slowly wearing away, and, though he fought it, his consciousness faded away on the plane.

It took me by surprise, actually. He had been talking to me just moments before, but was interrupted by a flight attendant who had come by to see if we needed anything to eat or drink. I asked for some water, then turned to Tino to see if he wanted anything. But he was far from wanting anything, his mouth open just a bit, soft little snores coming out. The woman saw that he was asleep, and excused herself, promising to return with a water for me, but I wasn't truly paying her any attention; I was too entranced by Tino.

His stomach would expand a little each time he inhaled, then shrink again as he exhaled. I simply watched, letting the relaxed pattern of his breathing sooth me, until the woman came back with my water. She smiled and sat it down on the little fold out table attached to the back of the seat in front of me, then excused herself to attend to another passenger. I turned back to Tino, prepared to observe him again, but the noise the flight attendant had made had stirred him a bit. His eyes opened a bit, and he looked at me for a few seconds, then laid his head on my shoulder and went back to sleep.

I vaguely wondered if he would remember doing this upon waking, but it didn't really matter, at least, it wouldn't to him. Though his head resting on my shoulder made my heart skip a beat, made it speed up, for him this was just a friendly gesture, a seeking of comfort. I turned my head, my lips pressed against his scalp, my nose buried in his silky hair, and breathed in his delicate scent. He always smelled clean, a little tropical, probably because of his soap. It had always amused me that he would so strongly claim that he wasn't feminine, yet insisted on buying fruit or flower scented shampoos. Still, I wasn't complaining, the smell was comfort. I had never told Tino, but I wasn't exactly fond of airplanes. I wasn't scared of them, per se, but I wasn't completely comfortable on them. Having Tino there, so calm, helped me relax a bit.

Mathias walked by, most likely on his way to the bathroom. He didn't miss our little moment, and gave me a smirk. Despite how annoying he could be, he was actually quite an encouragement. He realised how in love I am with Tino the first day he and Lukas came, and has since been pushing me to tell Tino how I feel. Though I often brush him off, and describe him as obnoxious, we've somehow formed a sort of... Acquaintanceship. He's supportive, and I don't hate him. That's about as mutual as it gets. Still, I must admit, it feels nice to have someone on your side.

He has assured me that Tino returns my feelings, but I'm too cautious to believe him. As much as I would like to trust him, my mind always warns me of the consequences that confessing to Tino could have. I have to remind myself constantly that this, our precious, seemingly infallible friendship was actually a terribly delicate thing. Though it was impossible for any situation or person to ruin our relationship, those three little words could shatter it in a second.

But, on the other side of this spectrum, there was an equally terrifying outcome. If I never told Tino, there would always be a "what if." Something I would never let go of, not for the remainder of my life. It would be just as terrible to die, always wondering, never knowing. Ignorance is a truly scary thing for me. But this meant that I had a decision to make, one that I was far from prepared to even contemplate. Still, I owed it to Tino, he deserved to know, to have his own choice.

Still, I was scared. Tino was the most important thing in the world to me, irreplaceable. How would I live without him if I learned that he didn't return my feelings? Though there are people who will claim that a confession of love doesn't necessarily ruin a relationship, I know better. How could we continue as we have if he knew I was longing for him? We couldn't, and that is a simple fact. So perhaps I could be subtle about it? If I noticed him getting uncomfortable, it would be easy to back off, make an excuse. But if he didn't, would I be able to tell him the truth? I hoped so, and decided to go ahead with this indirect approach.

I let my mind rest after this long contemplation, resting my head on top of Tino's, syncing my breathing with his, but not allowing myself to doze off. But my brain desired some quality time to blow off some steam, so I allowed myself to daydream, as a supplement for actual dreaming. My day dreams were always simple, just me imagining what my life could be, if only Tino loved me. I watched my mental self helping Tino tie an apron around his waist, a steaming dinner on the stove of a well designed kitchen waiting for the wooden spoon in Tino's hand to stir it. I watched him as he cooked, though in the back of my mind I reminded myself that Tino hardly ever cooked, and it would likely be my job if something like this ever became reality.

My fantasy Tino lifted the spoon to my mouth, silently asking me to try whatever he was cooking, which I eagerly did. I could almost taste whatever Finnish dish he had to be cooking. He smiled at me warmly, returning to his cooking. I came around behind him, wrapping him in my arms, holding him to myself. He chuckled, the light tinkling sound that I had come to love over so many years. I kissed his cheek, and he turned his head to the side, taking my lips instead. It was such a blissful, homely feeling.

But it was interrupted, by none other than reality. A voice came over the intercom, informing us that we were about to land, to buckle our seat-belts and remain seated. Tino and I had never removed our seat-belts, so I ignored the announcement. We descended slowly, not actually landing for another twenty minutes or so. When we finally hit the runway, and came to a stop, we waited another five minutes for them to set up the ramp for us to exit on. Then they allowed us to begin our departure. I waited until the line of people getting off thinned, then I shook Tino a bit, calling his name. He made a bit of a whining sound as I tried to wake him, but eventually opened his eyes, closing them quickly as his eyes were assaulted with the light of the plane. He blinked rapidly for a moment, adjusting his vision, then looked at me. "It's time to ge' off." I told him, and he nodded, removing his seat-belt and standing up. The crowd in the aisle had since dwindled, so he stepped out and undid the latch of the compartment above his head, trying to retrieve his bags. However, in his groggy state, he wasn't having much success. I grabbed the handle of his suitcase, pulling it out, then lowering it down, letting him take the handle. I took his backpack out as well, holding it while he

slipped his arms through the straps. I then pulled my own luggage down, and led him off the plane. He followed, clearly not completely conscious just yet, his free hand clinging to the back of my shirt.

I wished I could tell him how utterly cute he was when he was tired, but it didn't seem appropriate at the moment. We joined the crowd of people from our school, a few of who were looking almost as tired as Tino. We waited for a few more minutes, making sure that all of our students were here, then followed the teachers to the entrance, where we found buses waiting. I ushered Tino onto one, sitting him down in a seat, our bags at our feet. He still wasn't quite awake, staring blankly at nothing. We sat on the bus for a moment, waiting for everyone to be on one, then the bus pulled away from the airport. A well dressed woman stood at the front of the bus, a microphone in her hand. She announced that she would be conducting a tour, then we would be dropped off at our inn. I didn't think they still did things like this, but I suppose that Faiacre in and of itself was sort of a novelty.

Her voice, as loud as it was over the speakers, apparently startled Tino, as he was looking around, maybe a bit scared. I put an arm around his shoulder, trying to comfort him, and explained what was going on. This seemed to quell his fears, as he smiled and nodded. I could tell he was fighting to stay awake, forcing himself to pay attention to the woman as she told us about some of the places we could visit. Before I knew it, we were at the inn, given directions to go to the counter and give our names, and we would receive our room keys. I again helped Tino with his things, then followed the trickle of teenagers into the building. The lobby was crowded, all of us trying to get to our rooms at the same time. Well, almost all of us. A few of the more daring decided to go out immediately, probably to do some partying, as normal teenagers apparently do. Tino and I got into line, waiting as we slowly moved closer to the counter, watching as other pairs went to find their assigned rooms. Our turn finally came, and Tino gave our names. The woman behind the counter ran her finger down a list, then pulled a two keys off the wall behind her, handing them to him. He smiled and thanked her, turning around and allowing me to lead the way.

Using the numbers on the doors as clues, I located our room. Tino fumbled with the key for a bit before I took it and unlocked the door for him. He whispered a thanks, and entered. He dropped his suitcase on the floor, near the sink, which was opposite a small nook that was obviously meant to serve as a closet, considering there was a bar and some hangers inside. He then looked up, probably planning on choosing his bed, and I did the same, but found a surprise instead. Where I had expected to find two small beds, I found a single queen sized one instead. Tino turned his head to look at me, as if needing confirmation that he wasn't hallucinating. I returned his incredulous look, to the best of my face making abilities.

"U-Um... I think there was a mistake... We were supposed to get a double, right?" He asked. I nodded, vaguely curious as to why we had been given only one bed. "Hmm... Should we go ask for a different room?" He wondered, obviously contemplating it rather deeply. I ignored the question, walking to the window and shutting the curtain. Because we hadn't bothered turning the lights on, the room was enveloped in darkness. "Su-San?" He called. I took my glasses off putting them on the nightstand. His figure was obscured by the darkness, and even further by my lack of vision, but I could tell that he was waiting for his eyes to adjust. I took the majority of my clothing off, leaving only my boxers, then made my way to a still confused Tino.

"Doesn' ma'er. 's jus' ya. Ah don' mind." I decided, taking the hem of his shirt and pulling it up. He cooperated, lifting his arms and letting me pull it off. I wish this could be happening in a totally different situation, one which required a lot more kissing, and touching, but I didn't let my mind wander; now was definitely not the time.

“A-Are you sure? If we don't say something we might not be able to change later...” He pointed out, but I shrugged it off. Truth be told, I was feeling pretty lucky at the moment, the thought of sharing a bed with Tino for a week sounded quite appealing.

“Ah've slep' with ya 'fore.” I reminded him, and he sighed. I wasn't sure if it was in annoyance, relief, or just exhaustion, but he undid his pants and took them off, letting me lead him to the bed. I was worried that he would trip, but apparently the dull light from behind the curtain was enough for him to see. He flopped down on the bed, then quickly rolled over to make room for me. I got in, pulling the comforter over our slightly chilled bodies, then let my hand rest on his stomach. I had made the decision to give subtle hints, so this would be the first. I pulled him closer, sliding his body until his hip hit mine. He stiffened immediately, much to my dismay.

“Yer stiff again.” I informed him quietly, feeling him jump despite the low volume of my voice. “Ah wish ya wouldn' do tha'...” I admitted, slipping my arm under his head, my hand wrapping around to tousle his hair.

“I-I'm sorry... I just... I'm not really sure... What to think of...This...” He whispered, relaxing just a bit. Well, that was better than “Please get away from me.” I contemplated his words, realising that to speak truthfully would be confessing, so I came up with a different answer.

“Ah... Ah don' really know either... Jus' wan' ta hol' ya.” I tried, squeezing him just a bit harder. “Ah... Ah can stop if ya don' like i'...” I offered, expecting him to take me up on it.

“No... I don't mind.” He said. Well, that was definitely a better response than I had hoped for. He rolled over to lay on his side, nuzzling my chest, nestling himself there. He breathed for a few seconds, then sighed, pretty heavily.

“Fin?” I asked quietly, wondering what that sigh had been for.

“Sorry... It's just... I envy your future wife...Husband?” He replied. My heart sped up a bit at that. Why would that, of all things, come out of his mouth?

“W-Wha'?” I asked, my confusion and curiosity getting the best of me. He chuckled lowly, sounding almost a bit sad.

“Whoever they are, they're lucky. They get to have all of your love, and they get to cuddle with you like this every night...” He explained. This confused me further. The way he said it, it almost implied that he wished to fill this role. My stomach did a bit of a happy flip at the hopeful thought. I had to think for a moment, decide if I was ready for this. I took a deep breath, working up my courage, and took the leap.

“Tino, Ah love ya...” I admitted. I waited for a response for a second, a minute, three minutes. Then, as his nearly inaudible snores reached my ears, I realised that he was already asleep. I groaned quietly, so as not to wake Tino. After all that anxiety I had built up to tell him, he hadn't even heard me. But perhaps that was for the best. Maybe I had acted a little too quickly. This was, after all, the very first subtle hint I had given.

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I woke up before Tino the next morning, and slipped out of bed. I figured I would let him sleep as long as he wanted, so he could be fully awake all day. Still, we had gone to bed around the same time, so he would probably be up in a few minutes. I decided to get us some breakfast, so Tino wouldn't have to go out after he got up. If he did have to go and fetch his own breakfast, it would require him getting up, doing his hair, changing three times, brushing his teeth... By the time he finished it would be time for lunch. I, on the other hand, just had to put some clothes on, which I did, pulling them out of my suitcase and slipping them on as quietly as possible. I grabbed one of the keys as I went, and shut the door carefully.

Retracing our path from last night, I found the lobby, where they were serving us breakfast. I looked at everything they were offering, quickly deciding what I wanted. Then I tried to

guess what Tino would like, quickly deciding to get a variety of things, just in case. I got in line, putting the food onto a plate, then returned to the room. I fished the key out of my pocket, unlocking the door and entering.

I was surprised to find Lukas and Mathias in our room, talking to a conscious Tino who was wearing... my shirt...

"...Ah brough' ya some breakfas'..." I needlessly informed him, setting the food on our small table. He gave me a smile. "Why do ya have mah shir' on?" I asked, and he scratched the back of his head.

"I kind of forgot that I was only wearing my underwear... And I answered the door... It was the first thing I could grab... Sorry?" He explained, pulling the hem down a bit. I walked over and ruffled his hair, a gesture I had noticed usually quelled his fears.

"S'okej, I don' mind." I assured, and he gave me another smile. It seems like I get a lot of those, not that I'm complaining, not even close. Of course, being Mathias, he just had to ruin our lovely moment.

"So... Did you two fuck last night or something?" He asked, both Tino and I snapping our heads to give him a look, Lukas elbowing him harshly in the ribs. "Ow! What? Come on, you're thinking the same thing!" He complained, though Lukas just continued to glare at him. Poor Tino was red, the blush coming up from beneath my shirt, coloring the tips of his ears. Though I felt bad that he was embarrassed, he was just too cute when he got flustered.

"NO! Of course not!" He protested immediately, missing the smirk that Mathias sent my way.

"W-We just... We were too tired for Pajamas... And... Um... We're both guys?" He tried to explain, but Lukas scoffed at him.

"Tino, that only works for straight guys." He pointed out, making Tino pout. Another of his more adorable faces.

"W-Well... I-I..." He began, obviously not sure what he was going to say.

"Tino, we're kidding, we know you didn't. Calm down." Lukas explained, sighing a bit at Tino's naivety. Tino let out a huff of breath. "Anyway, where is your other bed?" Lukas asked, using his hand to gesture to the single bed in our room.

"Oh... We wondered the same thing, actually... I guess they accidentally gave us a single?" Tino offered.

"And you didn't go and ask for a room change?" Lukas asked, sounding incredulous.

"W-Well, it's not like we haven't slept together before..." Tino replied, and I didn't miss the reiteration of my words from before. Lukas sighed.

"Whatever. After you guys eat, do you want to go out? Mathias wants to go to the zoo, and I dread the thought of going alone..." Mathias pouted at his boyfriend's words, but didn't argue. Tino smiled.

"Sure, I'm up for it. Su-San?" He questioned, turning to look at me. I nodded. It didn't matter where we went, as long as it was together.

"Alright then, I'll see you two in a bit. Mathias and I are going to go get something to eat as well. Meet you back here in about half an hour?" Lukas offered, and Tino confirmed it by nodding.

"See you then." He promised.

After they left, Tino and I sat down at the table and began eating. He picked at a bagel and an orange, and I could tell he wasn't enjoying his meal very much.

"Sorry Ah can' cook fer ya... No ki'chen..." I apologized, wishing there was a kitchen in our little room. But he just shook his head, putting the bite of bagel that he had just covered with cream cheese into his mouth, chewing it slowly.

"No, it's alright. It'll just make it taste that much better when we get home." He assured,

smiling after he had swallowed his food. We were quiet for a bit, then something seemed to dawn on him. "Oh... That's right... I kind of fell asleep while you were talking last night... What was the last thing you said?" He asked, and I stiffened. So he had heard me... I just hoped that he was sleepy enough to have truly forgotten.

"O-Oh... Um... Ah didn' say anythin' after ya... Ya mus' 'ave been dreamin'." I said, my nervousness probably giving it away. But if he noticed, Tino chose not to say anything, returning to his half-eaten bagel.

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I wasn't surprised in the least that we spent nearly a half hour watching penguins. They had always been Tino's favorites, so it was expected that he would want to stay with them for a while. He was so excited about them, so excited, in fact, that he didn't notice me staring at him. I was pushing my luck. I probably should have been content with just holding his hand, happy that he hadn't yet withdrawn. But of course, I wanted more, and his expressions were just too cute for me to pass up. And, with his guard so completely down, I knew I wouldn't be caught. And so I watched Tino watch something he loves, watched his face light up, watched him giggle like a child, until he decided he was done, and stood. Using our still connected hands, he took me with him. He stretched for a moment, sitting like that for so long probably stiffening his joints. He began walking towards the exit of the building, giving me a small smile.

"Sorry... I didn't mean to stay here so long... They were just so cute!" He apologized. I shook my head, silently communicating to him that an apology wasn't necessary. We walked by the puffins, and he spared them a glance, most likely just out of courtesy. After watching for a few seconds, we turned, planning on leaving. I was surprised when I heard Tino's voice being called. We found Emil's roommate, looking just a bit worried. He explained that Emil hadn't moved from the puffin tank since they had arrived, and wasn't responding. Tino decided he would give it a go, and went to talk to Emil, leaving Xiao and I near the exit. I had noticed that Xiao was also rather reserved, much like Lukas and Emil, but I could tell he was concerned for his friend. He watched as Tino talked to Emil, or, at least, tried to talk to Emil. It didn't take me long to realise that he was in a situation similar to mine. I bent down to be at his ear level, which made him jump just a bit.

"There's a gif' shop." I said, pointing to the doors behind us. He gave me a look, then turned to look at the door, then back to me. He seemed to think on it a moment, then nodded, going through the door. He came back a few seconds later, a stuffed puffin in his hands, which he quickly deposited into Emil's. I watched as Emil processed his gift, then hugged Xiao. Tino watched the exchange, smiling a bit at the two before coming back to my side. It was subtle, but both boys were blushing, a cute little moment that Tino and I had the fortune of witnessing. I guessed that these two would be dating soon enough.

We watched them leave, and followed a little bit after, not wanting to appear to be stalking them all day. As we were leaving, we had to walk through the gift shop, and I could tell how depressed Tino was, having forgotten his wallet. I led him away, taking him to a wolf enclosure. I remembered that Tino loved wolves, almost as much as penguins, so he felt better after that. He requested a few more animals, all of which I led him to. It wasn't as if I had anywhere else to be, and I was enjoying my time with Tino. But he stopped suddenly, looking guilty, and decided that it was my turn. He asked me where I wanted to go, confiscating the map. I thought about it, only one animal really coming to mind.

I told him that I would like to see the cats, and he nodded, mapping out a route in his mind, and he began leading the way. In the completely wrong direction. I didn't say anything, knowing it would hurt his pride if I did. We passed several animals, including, strangely

enough, a donkey. Somewhere in my mind, I decided that I wanted to be holding his hand again, so I reached out and took it, happy when he didn't pull away. We passed bears, and were coming up on a birdcage, when I decided to intervene.

"Fin, Ah though' we were goin' to see the ca's..." I reminded, and his face flushed.

"U-Um... We are... I just, um... Well... I kind of got a little lost..." He admitted, looking defeated. I couldn't help but chuckle at him, pulling him over to a bench. I sat down, then tugged on his arm so that he fell as well, though I was disappointed when he managed to land on the bench instead of my lap, as I had intended. Still, at least he didn't move away.

"S-Su-San?" He mumbled, looking up at me. I wrapped an arm around his small shoulders, pulling him closer.

"Tire'. Le's res' for a bi'." I offered. I wasn't really tired myself, but I could tell Tino was getting a little weary. He nodded, laying his head on my shoulder. We sat silently for a while, but Tino always feels the need to fill a silence.

"Sorry for getting lost... You know how I am with maps..." He muttered.

"Ja. Ah knew ya were los'. S'okej. Fun." I assured, giving him a squeeze. He laughed.

"I had a feeling you knew. Thanks for not being angry."

"Can' be angry at ya." I informed him, and he smiled. I squeezed him once more, then we rested for a few more minutes. After our rest, I led him to the big cats. I hadn't lied when I said I wanted to see them. My favorite animal was amongst them, so I was secretly excited. We got there pretty quickly, and I walked up to the enclosure that held what I was looking for. The Lion.

They were such majestic animals, doing whatever they pleased while still asserting their authority as king of the beasts. This one was particularly beautiful, his golden coat well kept, shining in the bright summer sunlight. His large, round eyes were open, watching us watch him.

I felt Tino squeeze my hand, and I looked at him. He seemed happy. I looked down at our intertwined fingers, and that made me feel happy. I then returned to the lion, staring for a bit longer. I then snapped out of it, and stepped away, taking Tino with me. I apologized for taking so long, but he assured me that it was fine. On our way to the entrance, we ran into Lukas and Mathias. They too were ready to go. But I remembered something at the last moment, and excused myself, pretending that I needed to use the restroom. As soon as I was out of sight, I ran back to the penguin house. People seemed a bit surprised when I passed them, and I couldn't blame them; I'm sure a tall, scary Swede running through a zoo by himself must have looked pretty strange. Still, I made it there pretty quickly, and walked through the aquarium like enclosure quickly, going into the gift shop. I glanced around, quickly picking out a terribly cute, fluffy stuffed penguin, and paid for it. The lady behind the counter gave me an incredulous look. I'm sure if Tino had been the one buying it, it would have seemed perfectly normal, but for someone like me, it was understandably weird. Still, it was money in her pocket, so she opened the register, putting the money inside and handing me the change. I thanked her, and resumed my running, this time in the opposite direction. I must have looked even stranger, now equipped with a stuffed baby penguin, but I couldn't be made to care. I slowed back down to a walk as I neared them. Tino and Lukas were talking, though I couldn't hear what they were saying. I put a hand on Tino's shoulder when I got close enough, and he turned to look. Before he could even say a hello, I handed him the penguin. He looked down at it, his surprise obvious, then his face lit up, a grin making its way across his face. He thanked me with a hug, which I was more than happy to return, and realised that I had been the one with the idea to buy Emil a puffin. We then made our way out of the zoo, and learned that Lukas and Mathias had a date planned, so we agreed to find

ourselves something to do.

-.-.+.--.

After he had grabbed his wallet and put the Penguin on our bed, we headed back out, apparently on our way to a museum, which had been randomly picked from the back of the tags we had received from Mr. Raimondo. I could tell Tino wasn't very excited, but he knew that I was interested in history, so he went along with it. We rode the bus there, as it was one of the few things that would take too long to walk to. He allowed me to hold his hand while he looked out the window, taking in the scant scenery of Faiacre. (What could you expect from a place dedicated to fun? There wasn't any room for rolling hills, mountains, or fields. Just brightly colored flower patches, and the occasional tree.) Still, it was something to keep him occupied.

The bus ride didn't last long, and we were dropped off right in front of the museum. We walked into the building, following a crowd up to the front desk. The man there told us that we were free to look around. We ended up heading into the European exhibits first. He pretended to be interested while I examined the things in the exhibits, not really paying attention until we got to clothing in England. He seemed to like the dresses, and came to a stop in front of a beautiful wedding gown. He admired it, and I admired him, imagining him in the dress, his bright face lighting it up, his long lashes casting shadows on his amethyst eyes as he walked down the aisle.

"Su-San?" He called, and I snapped back to reality. Apparently he had noticed that I was day-dreaming.

"...S'jus'... Ya woul' look pretty in i'." I explained. He blinked for a moment, then flushed.

"Oh, come on, it's not nice to tease." He scolded, laughing a bit.

"Ah'm no' teasin'." I informed him, and he got a bit quiet.

"But... Su-San, I'm a boy..." He said.

"Ja. Yer still pretty." I replied. He opened his mouth, as though he meant to say something, but apparently thought better of it, closing it again. I took his hand as we exited, watching his face redden again, his hand getting warmer.

We continued through, making our way to the Spanish exhibit. I wasn't surprised when we found a sculpture of Don Quixote. I had thought my teacher was joking when, after finishing the book, he said we would see Don Quixote everywhere. He wasn't kidding. We looked around for a bit, and were about to leave, when we were joined by Antonio and Romano. Antonio greeted us, speaking mostly to Tino. Nobody but me seemed to notice that Gilbert had followed Antonio in. I stiffened, pulling Tino closer to me. Gilbert never brought about good things, especially not when intoxicated, which he so obviously was.

Just as I suspected, he caused trouble, trying to convince Tino to go out and drink with him.

"Well kid, want to come and get your drink on with the awesome me? It'll be better than hanging out with this giant-ass fag-troll."

Who was I to argue? It was probably true, and it wasn't like his insult was misplaced. Tino gaped for a moment, looking at me to gauge my reaction. When I didn't give him one, he looked back at Gilbert.

Well, I can honestly say, I wasn't expecting Tino to start a fight.

He leapt at Gilbert, punching him several times before he could even process that he had been attacked. A sickening crack accompanied each punch, but Tino did not relent. I watched as Gilbert tried to reverse their positions, then as he crawled out from under Tino, trying to get a hit, and failing. Then Tino started kicking, strategically hitting the back of Gilbert's knee, causing him to fall a bit. Another punch, and he went in for another kick, my mind finally told me to stop him, and I grabbed him from behind, backing away from Gilbert, holding

Tino tight as he struggled. I tried to calm him, saying his name, trying to bring him out of his little adrenaline induced stupor. He struggled a bit more before going completely limp in my arms. Somewhere along the line, Ludwig had come in, Feliciano hiding behind him as he restrained his brother, yelling at him in their native tongue. After he had calmed Gilbert down, he turned to me.

“Sorry, I lost him in a crowd. We were supposed to be going back to the inn, but he decided to take a detour. I apologize for the trouble he has caused. We will keep quiet about this if you will.” He said, sounding terribly formal. I simply nodded, picking Tino up and carrying him out to the bus stop. I sat on the bench, cradling him while he zoned out, probably coming off of his adrenaline high. He tried to apologize, which I did not allow. He sat on my lap till the bus came, then he got up, a bit shakily. I wrapped an arm around his waist, making sure he wouldn't fall as he boarded the bus. We rode in silence, not speaking until we had gotten off the bus and were walking to the hotel.

He fretted over the possibility of getting in trouble, proving my thought that he hadn't really been aware of anything following the fight. I explained to him what Ludwig had told me, and he breathed a sigh of relief. I led him to our room, where he sat on the bed, clearly a bit drained after the day's events. I sat down with him.

He demanded to know why I didn't stand up for myself, then argued when I explained it. I could tell that, were I to let this continue as it was, this may turn into our very first real fight. This in mind, I made it a bit of a joke, and we both ended up laughing it off. He crawled into my lap, seeking a hug, which I was ready to give. I laid down, pulling him with me. He giggled, laying his head on my chest. We stayed like that for a while before he grabbed the blanket, cover us both, and announced that he wanted to take a nap, which I agreed to, slipping off my glasses. I turned so I was lying on my side, wrapping one arm underneath his head, the other resting on his hip, drawing him closer to me, relishing in the gentle heat that his body produced. My nose was reacquainted with his tropical scent, and I relaxed, letting my breathing slow, regulate.

But after a few minutes, I heard a sigh. I knew something was up.

“Fin? Ya okej?” I asked.

“Mhm, I'm fine.” He assured, readjusting, wrapping an arm around my chest. “...I'm going to miss you...” He whispered, so softly that I doubted he even meant to say it out loud at all.

“Hmm?”

“I...It's just... Someday we won't be able to do this...” He explained, much to my confusion.

“...Why no'?” I asked. He pulled back a little bit, giving me an incredulous look.

“Because! You'll get married or something, and you'll probably move away, and You can't very well cuddle with another guy if you're married, and...” He began, and it dawned on me; He really had no idea that I intended to marry him, or not at all.

“Tino... Ah'm no' goin' to marry any'ne tha' isn'...” I was cut off by a knocking at the door, which distracted both Tino and I.

“Tino? Berwald? Are you two in there?” It was Lukas, and where Lukas was, Mathias followed. After letting them in, we learned that Mathias had also forgotten his wallet, and their reservation had subsequently been canceled. We made small talk for a bit, and eventually had to fill Lukas and Mathias in on the fight Tino had had with Gilbert. Lukas then asked if we would like to join them for dinner, and we agreed. There was some trouble with deciding on a restaurant, but everyone agreed on an Italian place a few blocks away. Tino glanced my way when it was suggested, but I quietly assured him that I would be alright. I was just happy that he cared enough to remember my distaste for the food. But, in all honesty, I had pretty much gotten over it, I only allowed him to continue believing it so it

could be used as an excuse. Assured that I would be able to handle, we went to the restaurant. We were eventually joined by Emil and Xiao. Somewhere along the line, Tino ran into Romano, who apparently thanked him for beating the daylight out of Gilbert. After dinner, we traveled back to the inn, separating to go to our respective rooms.

I offered Tino the first shower, which he took. Sat on the bed, listening to the dull drone of the water from the shower, listened to him fumbling with bottles of soap. He came out a few minutes later, his hair wrapped up in a towel, another covering his body from the torso down. And he claims that he isn't feminine.

I went to take my own shower, letting him dress in peace. My shower took a considerably shorter amount of time, though I was thinking of Tino the entire time, the smell of his shampoo still fresh in the room. The light was still on, though Tino was already in the bed, and, if his rhythmic breathing was any indicator, he was either asleep, or going to be very soon. I dressed quietly, then got into bed. I reached over him to put my glasses on the side table, and switched the lamp off before I withdrew my arm.

I pulled him closer, burying my nose in his still wet hair, the scent of his shampoo almost overwhelming, but so very him. He sighed, but didn't stir. I breathed it in, wondering if it was possible to get high off of something like this, but deciding that it didn't matter. The seconds passed, my consciousness giving way to sleep, though I was fighting to keep myself awake to bask in this precious moment. I could feel the soft beat of Tino's heart, lulling me to sleep, his warmth, trapped underneath the comforter, wrapping around me, his breaths slow, languid, as if every fiber of his body was singing me a lullaby.

How I wished that life could always be like this. How I wished that Tino belonged to me, and only to me. How I wished that I had a definite future with him. How I wished it could be easy to tell him what he really meant to me, not only as a friend, but as a love. If only the words could come to me easily, so I could whisper them to him, confidently, so I could describe to him, fully, how I feel. But words have never been my strong suit, and, truth be told, probably never would be.

Still, even if he was unconscious, he deserved to be told.

“Ah love ya.”

Chapter End Notes

Oh my goodness, this is the longest chapter I've written in... Well, actually, I think it's the longest ever... O.O Wow... Well, since I neglected my four days worth of Japanese homework up until now, might as well put it off a little longer and write an author's note!

Well, as many of you may have noticed, I rushed the last couple of chapters, like, a lot. And I appreciate those of you who were brave enough to tell me to slow down. And I'd like to apologize. I've been selling out, and it isn't fair to you guys. I'm sure you'd much rather wait for good, long, edited chapters than rushed, short, and typo-ridden ones. So from now on, I will try to slow down a bit. And I'm working on being more descriptive! Taking Fablespinner's advice, I tried to chill out, help you guys take it all in. Thank you for the constructive criticism, I really needed it.

And, because of my super rushing, I ended up with a plot-hole to fix! Thanks to

Cheshirejin for pointing it out to me, and I had Berwald fix it with his hammer in this chapter.

Ahem, so, like I said at the top, this chapter was written in Berwald's point of view. I got a lot of reviews asking for another chapter from Berwald, so here it is! Hope you guys are pleased! I'm still not sure if I'm getting his character right, but I'm trying my best! (And stalling... Haha, I have to figure out what's going to happen next. Such awesome planning, huh?)

Still, I think it's fun looking at events from the opposite perspective. And I hope Ber cleared up some confusion that some of you might have been having.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 29

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

For the first time in a long time, I woke up before Su-San. His arm was still slung loosely over my waist, his jaw resting on the crown of my head, his relaxed and rhythmic breathing moving a few strands of my hair each time he time exhaled. I smiled a bit to myself, happy to have the opportunity to revel in this little moment. As I've said before, Su-San is almost always the first up, making breakfast, cleaning, or even just waiting quietly for me to wake. Regardless, this was a rare little treat. I did my best not to move, knowing if I did, he would probably stir.

He was so warm, pressed so close to me that I felt the expanding and retracting of his chest as he drew breath, and, if I strained, I could pick out the quiet beating of his heart. I sighed happily, but quietly, letting the feeling of him ingrain itself into me, hoping it would give me the strength to get through the day. He smelled nice; clean, like Su-San. It felt safe. Even though I was in a pretty unfamiliar place, he was constant, and that was a comfort.

Even the night before, as I was dozing off, I realised that I couldn't fall asleep. Though I was pretty close to it, I hadn't been able to totally relax until he had gotten into bed with me.

Perhaps I was growing a bit too attached for my own good, but even knowing this, I couldn't pull away. Besides, in my defense, he had the choice of cuddling last night. I was beyond moving, so he could have easily disregarded me, and slept on his side of the bed. But he, of his own free will, snuggled me, and held me, and said he loved me, and... Wait... What?

Was I remembering that correctly? Surely not... There was no way! Su-San wouldn't say something like that, at least not seriously... But he thought I was asleep, if I was guessing right... So why joke? Why say anything at all? Had I heard wrong? It had been quiet, and I might have just dreamed it. I mean, I was pretty out of it, and so close to sleep... But it seems so vivid in my mind, so real. And would I have even dared to dream something like that? I guess the only real answer to my question would have to come from Su-San himself... But did I dare ask?

"Fin? Ya 'wake?" He asked, startling me. "...Ja, yer 'wake." He confirmed, obviously having felt me jump.

"Ahaha, sorry, you scared me..." I admitted, turning over so I could face him.

"Hnn. Sorry." He said, though I could tell that he wasn't.

"Mhm." I replied sarcastically, rolling my eyes.

"Ya don' believe me?" He asked, doing his best to look hurt.

"Not at all." I deadpanned, putting a lot of effort into not laughing at his failed expression.

"Hmm... Tha's too ba'... Ah'll have to convince ya..." He muttered, before wrapping his arms around me and pulling me tight against his chest. I gasped, his arms squeezing so tight I could hardly breathe.

"S-Su-San?" I stuttered, not being able to pull away as his arms were restricting mine.

"Wha-?" I tried, but he rolled over, taking me with him, much to my surprise. "Huh? W-What are you... OHYAAA!" We went crashing to the floor, but he didn't stop, just kept rolling.

"What are you doing? You're going to hit the wall! I don't understand!" I cried, confused beyond belief, wondering what on earth was happening. Was Su-San drunk? Had he somehow accidentally done some kind of drug? How else could this be explained? And we

just kept on rolling, coming closer and closer to the wall. It was going to hurt, I could just tell.

“Su-San! Please, I...” He stopped, right before my head smacked into the wall, and released a breath I had subconsciously held. “W-What...”

“Don' ya trus' me?” He asked, mock innocence lacing his tone.

“I...I... Never do that again! Holy... What was that for?” I demanded, still restricted by his arms.

“Well, ya obviously don' trus' mah words, so Ah though' ya coul' use a trus' exercise.” He explained, sitting up, then finally releasing me.

“A trust exercise? Of rolling on the floor? I think you watched the wrong friendship show... I thought you were supposed to fall backwards and have the other one catch you, or something...” I pointed out, resting my head on his shoulder.

“Hnn. Oh well.” He shrugged, wrapping his arms around me and intertwining his fingers, successfully trapping me yet again. I chuckled at his simple dismissal, all of my concerns of the morning all but forgotten.

“Well, on the bright side, I'm definitely awake now.” I offered.

“Ja. Mornin'.”

“Morning. Right, why do we keep getting up so early? Why don't we sleep in till noon, like normal teenage boys?” I questioned, looking up at him quizzically.

“Too much to do?” He guessed, shrugging when I gave him a look. “Ah tried.”

“Hmm...” I hummed, tapping a finger to my lip. “I guess we're just not normal teenage boys, huh?”

“Tha' coul' be it.” He agreed, scooting me off his lap so he could stand up, then offering me a hand. After pulling me to my feet, he ventured over to his suitcase to change, and I did the same.

Seeing as I had some time to myself while I changed, I tried to remember why I had been fretting before he woke up. His little rolling escapade had distracted me, and it's practically impossible for me to return to a train of thought after leaving it. I would have to wait until it came back of its own accord.

“Fin? Ya wan' to go ge' some breakfas'?” He asked, and I nodded. We walked down to the lobby of the inn, joining the stream of our classmates going in the same direction. I hadn't actually been down here before, so it was a bit exciting for me. Hei, what kind of life would I live if I didn't let little things excite me? We entered a big room, and I was immediately surrounded by innumerable smells. Pancakes, fruit, french toast, maple syrup, jellies and jams... I looked around hungrily, wondering what I wanted to eat.

“Why didn't you bring me pancakes or something yesterday?” I demanded, and Su-San gave me an apologetic look.

“They didn' have any yesterday. We slep' pretty late...” He pointed out, and I pouted.

“I guess so... Come on, let's eat before it's all gone!” I suggested, grabbing a plate and joining the line of people. Su-San followed behind me, waiting for me to take what I wanted before he would even touch anything. I had opted to get a little bit of everything, not having been able to decide, while Su-San had stuck with pancakes and some fruit. We found a table and sat down, blocking out the dull chatter of our classmates.

“Just pancakes?” I asked after a few moments of quietly eating. I just can't seem to let silence exist... I just... Need to fill it...

“Ja.”

“Hmm... Isn't that boring?” I pushed, trying to get him to talk.

“T's foo'.” He replied, putting a bite in his mouth. “...Gross foo'.” He added, making a face.

(Which was actually just a barely noticeable repositioning of his eyebrows, but, for him, that's a look of utter disgust.)

"Well, beggars can't be choosers. It's complimentary food, after all." I pointed out.

"...Tas'es like a mattress..." He griped bitterly, putting another bite into his mouth. I smiled, eating my food as well.

"It'll just make your food taste that much better when we get back. Eat your mattress like a good boy." I tutted, doing my best to sound like my mother.

"Um... Hello?" I jumped a bit, not having expected anyone to bother us in our little corner. I turned around, and found the quiet boy from my class... Matthew was it? He was holding a plate full of pancakes, and an entire container of maple syrup.

"Y-Yes?" I asked, not sure what this boy could want from me.

"Uh, well, all the other tables are full... Or they won't let me sit down... Do you mind if I sit here?" He asked me timidly, pointing to a chair at our table. How awful... He sounded like me before I moved; Lonely and unwanted, though outwardly there were no apparent flaws. He seemed like a normal enough boy, if not a bit quiet.

"Sure, that's fine." I assured, and he took a seat, giving me a small smile in the process.

"Thanks."

"Sure. You're Matthew, right?" I asked, and he nodded, pouring syrup over his pancakes.

"I'm surprised you remembered." He mumbled, now at the point of drowning his pancakes in syrup, yet he didn't stop.

"Do people forget you a lot?" I questioned.

"Yeah, but it's okay. I'm used to it." He replied, finally setting the syrup aside.

"That's... sad." I informed him. He gave me another smile, but this one was forced.

"Well, it can't be helped. Something about me is just... Forgettable. Most people don't even know I'm there until they run into me. In fact, this is the longest conversation I've had in months." He explained, and I frowned.

"Seriously? That's awful! Don't your friends talk to you?" I demanded, ready to get angry at any friends that he listed.

"I don't have friends, unless you count Alfred. And I don't. He only knows I'm there because he's my brother."

"Alfred is your brother?" I asked incredulously, the two completely different personalities making it unbelievable.

"Yeah. We apparently look alike. If people do notice me, it's usually because they're mistaking me for him." He said dully, now about half-way through his pancakes, and adding more syrup.

"Wow... I don't see it."

"Your the fi... Second. Sorry, forgot about Gil."

"Gil? As in, Gilbert?" I asked, my cheeks already flushing a bit at the name.

"Yeah. Gilbert. He didn't mistake us. He was the first ever. But... He can be kind of an ass sometimes, so I don't really hang out with him. I hear he got beat up yesterday, but nobody knows who did it. His brother is keeping it pretty quiet." He said, conversationally. Su-San gave me a look, and I stuck my tongue out at him.

"Haha, yeah, crazy." I offered, doing my best not to sound forced and awkward, and failing.

"Well, it happens. I'm sure he probably deserved it. Anyway, thanks for letting me sit here." I looked down to find that his plate was now empty, down to the last drop of syrup.

"O-Oh, sure. Anytime. Nice talking to you, Matthew."

"Yeah, you too. See you around." He offered, taking his plate up to the counter, then leaving. I watched him go, then turned back to Su-San.

“He was... Nice. Really down on himself, but nice.”

“Ja. He's always been like tha'. He's no' kiddin' when he says nobody notices him.” Su-San said, stacking his plate on top of mine and taking them up to the counter, me close on his heels.

“That's sad... I think I'd get along with him. He seemed a lot like me...” I trailed, and Su-San nodded.

“Ya woul' ge' 'long.” He agreed. He gestured for me to exit the lobby first, which I did, rolling my eyes at the gentleman treatment. He walked beside me, eventually taking my hand as we made our way back to our room. I turned my face to hide the flush, but smiled. Even though we got a few glances from passing peers, it was... Empowering. I found myself hoping that they would think we were dating, and back off.

We got to our room, and he unlocked it, holding the door open for me. I went in, and sat down on one of the chairs, joined promptly by him after he relocked the door. I laid my head on the table, trying to think of something for us to do today. We had already been to the zoo, and a museum. Both of these were pretty mild activities... Perhaps something more exciting today?

I jumped as I felt a touch to my shoulder, my head shooting up to find a concerned looking Su-San.

“Fin? Are ya okej?” He asked, frowning. I raised an eyebrow, wondering why he would be asking that. “Ya jus' slumped over on the table... Ya feelin' okej?”

“Oh! Yes, I'm fine! Sorry, I was just thinking. Any idea what you want to do today?” I asked, smiling to prove that I was fine. He didn't remove his hand from my shoulder.

“Wha'ever ya wan' to do. Doesn' matter to me.” He answered. I sighed, dropping my head again so that my nose was squished against the table.

“That doesn't help...” I groaned. He rubbed my shoulders a bit as a sorry. After some more thinking on my part, I gave up. “Whatever. Let's just walk around till we find something interesting. That okei with you?” He nodded, and we both located our wallets, put on our lanyards, and made our way out of the inn. I randomly decided to go to the right, and he followed, interlacing our fingers yet again, matching his pace with mine. We walked aimlessly for a few minutes, stopping outside a few places and deciding on whether or not we wanted to go in. I was getting a bit frustrated with our lack of decisiveness, when, to my surprise, Kiku solved my problem. I felt a gentle tug at my sleeve, and turned to find the exchange student, looking very apologetic.

“Kiku! Long time no see. How have you been?” I asked, giving him a friendly smile.

“U-Um... I do not understand phrase... Rong time no see? I saw you two days ago... Is that a rong time?” He asked, tilting his head to the side.

“Uh... No, I meant it sarcastically...” I explained, and he frowned.

“Ah. It seems I have yet to master this... Sarcasm. I wirru have to work on it.” He said thoughtfully. He was quiet for a moment, then he gasped. “Right, sorry, I forgot. I have a question.”

“Oh? Okei.” I prompted. He fidgeted with the hem of his shirt a bit before looking back up.

“I... I was wondering if you would... Would come to the amusement park with me?” He asked, giving me a hopeful look. My eyes widened.

What did he mean? Was this directed at Su-San and I both, or just me? Was it an “as friends” event, or was this him asking me out on a date? But that didn't seem likely for Kiku, especially not after what he had said on his first day. But then why was he asking me? He seemed to sense my confusion.

“I am sorry, I was asking both of you. I just... Ivan asked for me to go with him... But I am

scared... Stirru, it would have been rude to decline.” He admitted. “I would feerru better if you were there...” He added. I looked around, and, sure enough, I saw Ivan a little ways away, watching us. I turned to Su-San, and saw his discomfort. I had to admit, I wasn't too fond of Ivan either. But I felt bad for Kiku, who had somehow ended up landing himself on Ivan's radar. Su-San gave me a small nod, and, having made my decision, I turned back to Kiku, who looked like he was afraid I would say no.

“Okei, sure. Are you guys going right now?” I asked. I watched as relief washed over his face.

“Yes. Is that okay with you?”

“Joo, that's fine.” I replied, doing my best to give him a smile.

“You? You what?” He questioned, giving me a look.

“Oh, sorry! Finnish.” I explained. “It means yeah.”

“I see. I am afraid I am stirru trying to rearn engrish...”

“Haha, not at all. It's my fault.” We started walking towards Ivan. Perhaps it was my imagination, but it seemed that the closer we got to him, the closer Su-San got to me. My thoughts were confirmed as his shoulder brushed mine.

“Ah, you got them to come?” Ivan asked Kiku, who nodded. “How nice of you two to join us! How are you?” He asked, sounding friendly enough.

“We're good.” I replied, Su-San's fingers squeezing mine. “Better now that we have something to do.” I added.

“Da? Well, I am glad you could come along.” He said, smiling. I returned it, though I could tell that he didn't actually want us to come along. Still, we set off for the park, talking about nothing in particular, keeping the conversation reserved and impersonal. We had to take a bus, and this was, so far, the longest trip I had to make at Faiacre. After about ten minutes, I could see the tall roller coasters in the distance, seeming to skim the clouds above. I swallowed, my throat suddenly feeling very dry.

I wasn't particularly fond of heights... In fact, I was quite adverse to them. Knowing this, my mother had never taken me to an amusement park before. Now, seeing the sheer size of the rides... I was feeling a bit sick. Still, I had agreed to come, so I couldn't back out now.

Besides, agreeing to go didn't mean I had agreed to go on a roller coaster!

The bus stopped, dropping us off at the entrance. I looked up, the roller coasters mocking me from on high, making me gulp. But then I glared, scowled. How dare they mock me! I'd show those stupid roller coasters!

Su-San and I followed Kiku and Ivan in. Kiku, after nearly being tempted onto a roller coaster, admitted to never having ridden anything of the such, and, to my relief, we started off with a gentler ride. Perhaps it was strange for four teens to pile into a spinning teacup, but I wasn't complaining. The ride started, and I sat back, prepared to relax for a bit, and enjoy the gentle breeze. Ivan, however, didn't seem to think that we were spinning enough. He grabbed the wheel in the middle, pulling, consequentially making us spin much faster. I guess this is the point of teacup rides, but... I don't have the strongest stomach when it comes to spinning. Needless to say, I was more than happy when the ride came to a stop. Ivan made a small sound of disappointment, and we were let off. I looked to Kiku, who looked about as queezy as I felt.

“Are... Are all of the rides that... Spinny?” He asked, rubbing his stomach. I gave a pained smile.

“Fortunately, no.” I replied. He breathed a sigh of relief.

“Okay, next one, da? A roller coaster this time?” He pushed. My heart dropped a bit.

“Shoul' star' with a small one.” Su-San reminded him.

“Da, I know. The one over there is small! Let's go!” He urged, grabbing Kiku's hand and forcing him to walk towards it. I frowned, hoping it wasn't making Kiku too uncomfortable (though I know it was), and followed. We joined the line, which wasn't too long. (Likely on account of it being a weekday, during the school year.) I looked at the roller coaster we were about to board, butterflies fluttering in my stomach, the sensation intensifying each time we got closer. Finally, it was our turn, and I sat down next to Su-San in the car. I strapped myself in, and was proud of myself for having gotten on it. They checked the latches and seatbelts, then sent us on our way. Up we went.

That was when I started freaking out.

“S-Su-San?”

“Hnn?” He turned to me. “Fin? Are ya okej?” He asked, noticing my trembling lip. I'm sure my eyes were probably glassy too, seeing as I was on the verge of tears. I shook my head, closing my eyes tightly. I felt tears slip out of the corners, and sniffled a bit.

“I want off...” I informed him.

“...Ya can'... Ah...” He stuttered, obviously a bit at a loss. The best he could do was grab my hand, squeezing it tightly. “It'll be alright. Promise. Real quick.” He assured me. I kept my eyes closed, squeezing his hand for all it was worth. I didn't have a chance to think about it anymore. Next thing I know, we were falling. My eyes shot open in surprise, and I screamed, claspings Su-San's hand as if I would fall out without it. We shot down, then back up, and down again, then through a curve, through a tunnel. Slowly, the fear wore off. Truth be told, this wasn't as bad as I had made it out to be. Maybe even a little... Enjoyable? Indeed!

But before I could get into it, the ride ended. We came to a stop, the lap guards lifted, and we were told to exit to our right. I blinked stupidly for a moment, then scrambled to undo my seat belt. Su-San offered me a hand out, which I used. I stumbled a bit, my footing questionable. He helped me walk to the exit, and brought me to a bench, sitting me down. He bent down and looked into my face.

“Fin?” He asked, concern more than evident on his face. I blinked rapidly, finally coming to my senses.

“Oh, sorry, I'm alright... Just... Shaking off the adrenaline. That... That wasn't too bad, actually.” I admitted. His frown lessened, and he ruffled my hair.

“So yer okej?”

“Joo. I... I'd like to go on another.” I announced. He seemed surprised, but agreed to it. We turned to ask Ivan and Kiku if that was alright, but found that they were in no state to reply. Ivan was holding Kiku in his arms, rocking him slowly. I furrowed my brows, this display unsettling me a bit. I realised that Kiku was shaking a bit, and got up.

“Kiku? Are you alright?” I inquired. I received a small shake of the head. I frowned, gesturing for Ivan to sit down. He did so, not letting go of Kiku. Now that I could see him, I could see his terror, his face pale, his eyes clamped shut.

“Kiku? Hei, can you look at me?” I asked, speaking softly.

“N-No. I... I don't ferru werru.” He replied, turning his face away from me, into Ivan's chest. Ivan held him a bit tighter. I guess I should have expected that. The teacups had been rough for Kiku... What were we thinking taking him on a roller coaster? Of course he wasn't okei!

“I think I better take him back to the inn, da?” Ivan decided, standing back up. He smiled at us, offering a quick nod as a goodbye, then walked back towards the entrance, Kiku still in his arms. We watched him go, and I was a bit awestruck at how quickly we had lost our companions. It seems only moments ago Kiku had asked me to come along, and now we were alone at the park. Well, perhaps today was fated to be our day alone together? After all, there's no such thing as Coincidence. I turned back to Su-San, and was surprised to find that

he was glaring.

“Su-San? What's wrong?” I questioned.

“...He planne' tha'.” He replied. My eyes widened.

“What? But why would he do that?”

“He likes Kiku. Wante' him to nee' him.” He explained.

“He... He got Kiku on a roller coaster so that he would practically go catatonic... Because he likes him?” I tried to understand, but my mind couldn't comprehend it.

“Tha's how he works. He nee's Kiku to nee' him.”

“Needs Kiku to need him? So... He needs to have someone dependent on him? That's a relationship for him?”

“Ja, tha's how it was when he was datin' Yao Wang. They broke up a few years 'go. Anyway, s'no' our business.” He reminded me. I sighed, nodding.

“I guess not...” I agreed. Honestly Ivan's weird way of flirting was better than what I did... Hide my feelings and pray for a miracle...

“D'ya wan' to stay here? Now tha' they're gone, we can leave if ya wan'.” He offered. I shook my head, smiling, and grabbed his hand.

“I want to stay! Now that I know that they aren't horrible, I like roller coasters! Can we go on another?” I asked, doing my best to make big puppy eyes.

“Ja. Which one?” I grinned, pulling him into a walk.

“I don't know... The next one we run into. Really, I feel like I'm ready for anything! So much adrenaline! Maybe I'm one of those adrenaline junkies after all? I mean, I was scared at first, but after I figured out that I wasn't going to die, it was pretty fun. Oh, and while we're here, can we ride the carousel? I haven't been on one in years, and I miss going around in a circle on a fake animal. I mean, how can you beat a plaster horse? I think I saw a lion though... That beats a horse... Can you beat a lion? Hmm... I don't think so... Maybe a real lion... OH! They should make penguins! I would soooo ride a plaster penguin! You'd never get me off! Oh, speaking of which, anything you want to ride?” I rambled, finishing up with a question. He blinked a few times, and I smacked myself mentally, realising that I had been talking his ear off. After catching up, he got a look of deep thought on his face. (This means he furrowed his brows a bit more than normal.)

“...The Ferris Wheel.” He decided. I raised an eyebrow.

“The Ferris Wheel? But why? You can ride that at any carnival...” I pointed out.

“It's tradition.” He said simply.

“I...Well, I guess so...” I mean, have you ever seen a movie with people at an amusement park that didn't ride the Ferris Wheel? And have they ever not gotten stuck at the top? Hei...

Maybe the Ferris Wheel wasn't a bad idea. “Okei, that's fine, but it comes last, so we can ride it while it's dark, okei?”

“Ja.” He agreed. I smiled, and finally caught sight of another roller coaster. I pointed, and pulled him into line. And so began our day...

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A few hours later finds us sitting on a bench, taking a break from all the rides. As fun as it was, it was definitely a tiring practice. Walking around the park, waiting in lines... All for those few seconds of excitement. Still, it had been worth it, so far. We had conquered about half of the park, and it was about lunchtime. After our little break, Su-San located a on-site restaurant, and we ate there. Then it was back outside for us. We found our way back to where we had rested, and continued walking towards the unseen part of the park. I had just seen the telltale rails of the next roller coaster above us, when my eyes were drawn back down.

And what, you ask, caught my eye, distracted me from a roller coaster? A parasol. I mean, I had never been before, but who brings a parasol to an amusement park? The only redeeming quality was that it wasn't frilly... Very white though. Su-San seemed to have noticed this oddity as well, and we proceeded to stare. Hei, we're human, alright? We stare at things that seem out of place! It appeared as though this person was going to the same ride as we were. "Hey, West! Do you have my sunscreen? It's been an hour and a half... I probably burned on that last one..." I recognized the voice and gasped. Why did HE, of all people, have to be here? Seriously? I just beat the kid up yesterday... At least give me some time to collect myself before our next run in! But, as my luck had it, my gasp alerted him to my presence, and he turned around.

His eyes, red as rubies, fell on me, and I immediately shrunk away, grabbing Su-San's arm and trying to hide myself. His eye, despite my guess yesterday, had managed not to become a full fledged black eye, but there was a bruise near his pale eyebrow.

"I can see you! But it kind of hurts... You're wearing white... Ow..." He complained, turning away a bit and blinking. "Fuck... West, where are my glasses?" He called. Ludwig, who I hadn't noticed before this, sighed, letting go of Feleciano's hand to dig through a small backpack.

"They aren't in here. You left them in your room. Now can I please TRY to enjoy my date with Feleciano? Go find someone else to follow around." He said, an air of finality about his words. Gilbert frowned.

"Mein gott, bruder! You can't just tell the awesome me to fuck off like that! What happened to bros before hoes?" He demanded, and Ludwig glared.

"That 'hoe' happens to be my boyfriend. And I'd like to spend some time with him... Without you. Find something to do for a few hours." Ludwig finished, walking back to Feleciano, then leading him away. Gilbert stood there for a moment, then turned back to us.

"Whatever, the awesome me doesn't need him. Oh, right, I was talking to you. How awesome of me." He recalled, grinning. "Gotta say, you threw some awesome punches! Didn't think a little guy like you had it in him!" He continued. I blinked, coming out from my failure of a hiding place.

"Y-You're not mad?" I asked.

"Huh? Oh, nah. The awesome me has been in worse fights."

"Oh... Well, um, I'm still sorry! I didn't mean to..."

"Like I said, nothing to worry about. I wasn't being very awesome... Sorry tall-scary dude. I said some not-awesome things." He admitted, turning to Su-San. Su-San nodded, acknowledging his apology. And then, apparently, everything that was wrong between us had been fixed.

"Well, the awesome me is hungry. See you around." He waved, walking in the opposite direction. I watched him go, then shook my head.

"So... We're... Friends now?" I wondered aloud.

"As close to frien's as possible with tha' guy..." He added. I looked up at him, then broke into a giggle.

"Well, that was... Rather, wasn't what I expected. I thought he was going to go for round two for a second there! Well, I would prefer being friends to enemies."

"Ja." He agreed.

-.-.+.--.

The sun had dipped down past the horizon about thirty minutes ago, the moon now providing light, along with the bright, neon lights attached to rides. As promised, we had saved the Ferris wheel for very last. We got into the dwindling line, our turn coming quickly. We loaded

into the little gondola, and off we went. I secretly crossed my fingers, hoping we would stop at the top. Cliches are cliches for a reason! They wouldn't be overdone if they weren't wonderful! Granted, I didn't know what I expected to happen, even if we did get to stop up there.

Of course, with my stupid, unfortunate luck, my wish was only half granted. We did get stuck, but it was about a fourth of the way up. We waited for about two minutes, assuming that they were loading more people on, but, instead of starting back up, the machine turned off.

"Our apologies, the Ferris Wheel is experiencing technical difficulties. We will get it running again as soon as possible, so please relax, and again, we apologize for the inconvenience." A voice over an intercom blared. I groaned. We were too high for them to let us jump out, but still low enough to be seen. Not very romantic!

"Goo' thin' it was las'. Don' have anymore rides to rush to." He offered, trying to look on the bright side. I rolled my eyes, leaning back a bit, getting as comfortable as I could.

"I guess. Honestly, you'd think they'd have these things worked out! But, I guess I can't blame them. They just push the buttons."

"Ja." He agreed, then we fell quiet. After a few seconds, the silence was killing me. I tried to think of something interesting to talk about, but nothing came to mind. Until I remembered this morning. That's right! I had a question to ask him! And there was no way we were getting interrupted up here! Perfect!

"Hei, Su-San?" I said, getting his attention. "Um... Well, the past few nights... I keep thinking I hear you say something, right before I fall asleep..." I started. I saw him sit up straighter. That means that the guards are up. That was a problem. "I thought it was just a dream, but last night it... Well, it didn't seem like a dream." He shifted, his posture straightening even more. He was uncomfortable... So he had said something. "In fact, I'm pretty sure it was real. No, I'm absolutely sure." I decided. "I just... I'm not sure what exactly you said." I finished, looking to him, hope in my eyes. He looked worried, tense, like I knew something I shouldn't, and was planning to use it against him. "So... What did you say?" I asked, trying to sound as innocent as possible. He hesitated, obviously mulling it over in his mind.

"Fin... Ah..." He sighed, and beckoned me over to him. I stood, wobbling over awkwardly thanks to the rocking of the gondola. He grabbed me before I could sit down, pulling me to his chest, wrapping his arms around me tightly. He breathed in and out for a bit, and, due to my close proximity, I could hear how fast his heart was beating. He took another deep breath, then started again.

"Fin, Ah never though' Ah was goin' to say this... When Ah move', I tried to cu' ya ou' of mah life. Though' it was for the bes'. And it worked, at firs'. Ah was lonely, an' Ah missed ya, bu' Ah though' ya would be happier. Bu' then... Then ya moved in, and Ah realised how much I need ya, Fin. Ah can' even imagine life withou' ya again... Yer so importan' to me, an'... Tha's wha' makes this hard." He paused, taking a few seconds to catch his breath.

"Ever since we me', an' even more now, Ah... Fin, Ah..." With a jolt, the Ferris Wheel started back up. I groaned mentally. Unless I was a stupid fuck, he was about to say exactly what I had wished for my whole life. But, of course, the world seems to be against me! We made our way around, but started slowing down. I realised where we were, and sighed at the irony. I HAD wished that we would get stuck at the top... And sure enough, it broke down again, us suspended at the top. I felt a warm breeze, mussing my hair, the sweet smells of funnel cake and other amusement park food wafting up to me. I guess the shock of what had almost happened was making my senses acute. I was noticing unimportant things... Or maybe I was trying to distract myself from reality... And failing.

I didn't get a chance to curse fate, myself, or really think at all. It took me a few seconds to realise that there were soft, thin lips, pressed against mine. My brain malfunctioned, so overstimulated, so overwhelmed. Surely I had lost my mind, had fallen asleep, surely this wasn't real. Things like this don't happen to real people, especially not overemotional, feminine, self conscious Finnish boys! But what else could I chalk this up to? This was so much sweeter, so much more awkward than I would have imagined it. Before I could even catch up, even piece my shattered mind back together, he pulled away. He glanced at me, looking almost guilty. I stared, mouth gaping, eyes unblinking.

"F-Fin?" He called, timidly. I blinked, still not daring to take my eyes off of him. He stared back, still obviously worried. "Fin? Y-Ya need to breath..." He reminded me. I blinked, shaking my head and drawing in a huge breath to replace the one I had unwittingly been holding. I returned my gaze to him, sizing up what had just happened.

"Fin? Please tal' to me..." He pleaded.

"I-I... Um..." I tried, failing to string any intelligible words together. How was I supposed to respond to that? That couldn't be mistaken as anything other than a confession of love. So, he loved me? "...Um... Me too? I think..." I said, not even sure what I had said at all. His eyebrows furrowed.

"Ya too? Wha'? Ah don'..."

"Um... I... I l-l-love you, Su-San." I finally managed, my face instantly heating. I buried my face in my hands, my brain finally catching up. "Oh my GOD! Perkele, that wasn't how I planned this at all! I-I... Oh, Su-San, I'm so..."

He cut me off, pulling me closer and crushing his lips to mine. I gasped a bit, the sudden action having surprised me, but I caught up much quicker this time, and closed my eyes. This one lasted longer, and I was forced to pull in air from my nose, though this was also pretty unsuccessful, as his was smushed against mine. We broke apart, both of us gasping for air. After a moment of trying to catch our breath, we looked up, staring at each other yet again. Then I broke out into giggles. I don't really know where they came from... Maybe my fear of this exact situation had been repressing them, and now that the fear is gone... They were free? Regardless, I couldn't stop laughing.

"O-Oh my gosh... That really just happened?" I managed between my laughter. "That had to be the most awkward thing I've ever done! But I'm so happy!" I finally calmed down, my giggles subsiding. "I... I never actually thought... I never thought I would ever tell you." I admitted. "But it's true. I love you, I always have! Oh, wow, it feels so nice to say it! I love you, Su-San!" I said, my voice getting a bit louder than should have been allowed. But he didn't mind. In fact, he smiled, a rare treat.

"Ah love ya too, Fin. So much."

Chapter End Notes

Finally, after 28 chapters, there it is. FUUUUUUUUUUCK. What am I going to do know? Well, there is still a lot of No Such Thing yet to come, don't worry. But... Well... What did you guys think? Was it awkward enough for them? I'm actually not going to talk much about it here, I'd rather hear your thoughts! Thanks for reading, and feedback is appreciated!

KuroRiya

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Chapter 30

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Eventually, they got the Ferris wheel up and running again, and we made the slow descent to the ground. I think the employees must have noticed the change in our demeanor, and it made me flush a little under their gaze. I mean, we came out holding hands, and I was giggling like a little girl. Then again, these people probably saw things like this everyday, it probably wasn't as exciting to them as I thought it was. But for me, there could be nothing more exciting, more fantastic.

My dream of someday having Su-San all to myself, and to be completely his in return... It was becoming reality, and no dream could ever taste as sweet. My hand in his, just a bit sweaty from my nervousness and the body heat that we were sharing where we connected... And it was somehow so different from all of the other times we had held hands. It was new, refreshed, and full of unyielding affection, no longer kept hidden away, locked up. It felt right, if not a little awkward. But awkward was part of us, it always had been. Awkward was familiar, a fleeting thought surfacing only in the back of my mind.

He lead me towards the entrance of the park wordlessly, not having to ask if I was ready to leave. This wasn't new to us, we had always known each other inside and out. But, just like the hand holding, my mind romanticized it wildly, reevaluated it as something completely new, making my heart race for no particular reason. I looked up at him and smiled, content that I no longer had to worry about what I would do when I lost him. All of my fears had been nullified by a simple action, a hesitant, childish kiss. This wonderful, cherished, faultless man before me was mine, and mine alone.

He caught me looking, and my cheeks reddened at the eye contact, but I didn't break it. At that point we were out of the park, so we stopped, and just stared for a moment. I took in his face in the waning light, shadowed heavily, but still handsome beyond belief, his oceanic blue eyes reflecting my flushed face. What he saw in a scatterbrained, red-faced, disproportionate little Finn who couldn't even walk on his own I would never know. But who was I to question something so wonderful. We felt a mutual gravity between us, and our faces were slowly pulled together by it, our lips brushing yet again.

I giggled, pulling my hand from his and wrapping it instead around his neck, pulling his face down closer to my level, and gave him what I considered to be a better kiss. Harder, longer, so perfect as he wrapped his arms around my waist, just as I had wished. I was glad for the dark surrounding us, making us less noticeable. Not that I was embarrassed about being with Su-San, I just didn't want anyone to ruin this long-anticipated moment for me. We broke apart again, this time slowly, and I smiled languidly at him. I felt so at peace, so happy, so fulfilled. We returned to walking, holding hands and made our way to the bus stop. He sat down on the bench, then pulled me down into his lap, making me gasp at the sudden action. But I relaxed quickly enough, cuddling into his chest, sighing with content. We waited like this a few minutes, and I thoroughly enjoyed basking in this new found affection, as well as his warmth. (Which, trust me, is particularly overwhelming in the heat of summer, but there was no way I was pulling away!)

The bus showed up, and we were forced to move the few feet through the doors and into seats. We sat normally for the bus ride, not wanting to alarm the elderly couple sitting across

from us. I looked out the window, watching as countless street lamps and the occasional tree passed by my vision. I jumped a bit when I felt his fingers on mine, but smiled warmly and relaxed, trying not to alarm the couple to what exactly it was we were doing.

Our bus ride was over quickly enough, and we disembarked, heading towards the inn. It was only a block away, so we made quick work of the walk, and made our way to our room quickly, glad that there was nobody in the lobby who would want to talk. Su-San had the key out, and was turning it when I heard a voice calling my name, and turned around to find Lukas.

“O-Oh, hei Lukas.”

“Hey indeed. We couldn't find you this morning, so we went to the beach by ourselves. You two found something to do, I hope?”

“Yes, we went to the amusement park today. Sorry we didn't tell you guys...” I apologized, giving him a sheepish smile.

“That's alright. It was nice to have some alone time, I guess... Are you two alright?” He asked abruptly. I tensed up a bit, glancing at Su-San. Oh, we were definitely alright, more than alright. But I didn't know if I was ready to tell Lukas that we had... Well, you know. I got the feeling that I was going to get a huge 'I told you so' as soon as he heard it. But, Lukas is kind of one of my best friends...

He was eying us the entire time that I was contemplating this, and he exchanged a glance with Mathias, much like I did with Su-San, then his face broke into a smirk.

“Tino?”

“Y-Yes?”

“...I told you so.” He said simply, and my jaw slackened a bit.

“W-What?” I asked, dumbfounded.

“You two are SO obvious. Berwald, I'm borrowing Tino for a few minutes. Mathias, stay here.” Lukas commanded, grabbing my wrist and pulling me down the hall.

“Haha, is it time for girl-talk?” Mathias called.

“Call me a girl again, and we'll see who has the female parts.” Lukas shot back, rounding the corner with me in tow. I followed him, coming to a stop in front of a room that I'm assuming was his. My guess was confirmed when he pulled a key out of his pocket and unlocked the door. After he got it open, he pulled me in, practically flinging me into the room. I had to regain my footing, then I took a moment to take in the new surroundings. It wasn't really all that new though: It looked just like my room, with the exception of the second bed.

Lukas didn't give me much time to look around though, pushing me onto one of the beds and then sitting down next to me.

“Well?” He demanded.

“W-well what?” I questioned, looking at him, unsure.

“How did it happen? Knowing you two, it was absolutely awkward, wasn't it?”

So it was time for girl-talk. I gave him a strained smile.

“U-um... I guess it was awkward... We were stuck on the Ferris wheel, and... Well...”

“What did he say? Was it 'I like you' or a full blown 'I love you'?”

“Uh... I love you? And he kissed me...” I replied. He smirked, partaking in a quiet chuckle.

“I. Told. You. So. And you doubted me. Also, just for your information, you two are bad at hiding it. I could tell immediately. I didn't say anything at first, as I figured I might be reading into it too much... But you two are so, so very obvious.” He chided, making me flush. “But I'm happy for you.” He added on.

“Well, thanks, I guess...”

“...Go ahead and ask.” I rolled my eyes, knowing I had been caught.

“Well... I don't know how this whole dating thing works...” I admitted. He nodded.

“I figured as much. But you two have practically been dating this whole time. It just wasn't official. Keep doing what you've been doing, just throw a few kisses in every once in a while.” He advised, and I nodded, thankful for the advice.

“Thanks Lukas. It's going to take some getting used to, but...”

“Oh, right, you probably want to get back, don't you? Sorry I interrupted.”

“Huh? Interrupted? Interrupted what?” I asked, genuinely confused. He gave me an 'are you serious' look. When I showed no hint of joking, he rolled his eyes.

“Weren't you two about to fuck?”

Needless to say, my face got very hot very fast, my jaw dropped, and I began to get a cold sweat, all at once.

“W-what? No! We were just going to sleep! ...I think... I mean, we just started dating, and...”

“Like I said Tino, you two have practically been dating the whole time. You just added a label to it. I hope one of you brought lube though... Spit isn't as effective as they like to make you think.” I gasped, covering my face with my hands, trying to hide my blush. “What? Come on Tino, you're gay, you're going to have to get used to the idea of it!” He scolded, pulling my hands from my face.

“L-Lukas, I... I feel a little lightheaded...” I mumbled.

“Lightheaded? I would think it would feel heavier what with all the blood you've got rushing there.” He pointed out. “And calm down. Sex isn't a bad thing. In fact, it's quite...”

“JUST STOP THERE!” I yelled, effectively cutting him off. He smirked, shaking his head.

“Alright, fine. But if you do want any advice or have any questions, you know where I am. Now let's get you back. I'm sure they're getting antsy. Or rather, Mathias is probably getting annoying. Either way Berwald is miserable. Come on.”

I followed him out, walking back to the room I shared with Su-San. I was surprised to find the hallway empty. He had actually let Mathias in! I knocked, feeling a bit inadequate, seeing as Lukas had his own key to carry around. I only waited a moment before Su-San opened the door. It was easy to tell that he was annoyed, and he quickly shoved Mathias out the door, pulling me in.

“Thanks for watching him for me. And sorry. See you two later.” Lukas said shortly, waving. He then turned, pulling Mathias behind him by the tie. Su-San closed the door, then sat down in one of our chairs, letting out a long sigh.

“Ah can' stan' 'im! Ah don' know how Ah'm goin' to manage when we go back!” He exclaimed, throwing his arms up in the air to exaggerate his point. I chuckled, walking over to him and pressing my knees gently against his, taking his hands in mine and holding them in front of us.

“You'll manage. You always do!” I reassured, kissing his cheek. He made a small noise, then pulled me into him, pulling his hands out of mine in favor of cradling my face and kissing me. I smiled into it, putting my hands on his thighs to help me balance. We stayed like that for a bit, exchanging kisses, just staring into each others' eyes, generally enjoying our new ability to be intimate.

“Ah'll be alrigh', as long as yer with me.” He whispered. I blushed and giggled at the horribly cheesy line, kissing him again as a reward for having the fluff inside to say it. Su-San is a perfect example of someone who can get away with being cliché and cheesy, as he's legitimately like that, even when he isn't trying to be romantic.

“Well, no worries. I have no plan of leaving ever, let alone anytime soon.” I replied, sitting myself down in his lap. He pulled me closer, pressing a kiss to my neck, then let his face linger there, his warm breath ghosting over my shoulder. I shivered a bit, but held still, letting

him do as he pleased, which honestly wasn't much. He just held me, breathing slowly in comparison to my quick, excited little breaths. We held this position for a few minutes, and I eventually relaxed enough for my face to return to its normal, pale pallor, and for my breathing to even out.

"Fin? Do ya wan' the firs' shower? Gettin' sleepy." He admitted. I pulled away, giving him a smile.

"Me too. But you can go first." I assured, getting off his lap so he could get up. He did, taking my hand. I raised an eyebrow, questioning, but said nothing. I realised too late that I was being lead to the bathroom, and that struggling now would be futile. Apparently we were going to share.

The redness was already returning, but I was doing my best to contain it. I mean, this is something I'd have to get used to... He closed the door behind us and turned the water on and pulled the stopper to convert it to a shower, letting it run so that it would warm up before we got in. Again I was faced with disrobing in front of Su-San, and I was just as unsure about it this time. What if he saw my body, and suddenly remembered that I'm not attractive, and broke up with me on the spot? I couldn't even chase after him, seeing as I would be naked!

"Fin, it's jus' me." He reminded me before I could even argue, taking my shirt in his hand and pulling it off. I nodded, lifting my hands so he could complete the action.

"I know. Sorry. You know how I am..."

"Hmm." A throaty, noncommittal sound. I rolled my eyes, watching as he too removed his shirt, tossing it on top of mine. I looked once more at his chest, tracing the lines with my eyes. I could feel him doing the same, and I guess I didn't mind, seeing as he wasn't running away in disgust. I looked up at his face, taking in the expression, still uncomfortable, but doing my best to relax. He too looked up, meeting my eyes, his face sober, very serious. I wondered what he could be thinking, but he answered my question for me.

"Fin... Coul' Ah..." He tried, but cut off, looking down, clenching his fist. Could he what? Did he want to hit me? I really hoped not. "Coul' Ah touch ya? Jus' up 'ere?" He asked, looking at my face to gauge my reaction, fear of rejection obvious in his eyes. I don't know if it was the fact that I loved him to pieces or the rising steam from the bath water, but I suddenly couldn't care less that I was bare in front of him, or that he wanted to touch me. Lukas was right. We had been dating and we didn't even realise it, or perhaps we did, and refused to acknowledge it. Regardless, we were past the new couple phase long ago. We already went on dates (also known as hanging out, just the two of us), held hands, cuddled, slept together, bathed together... It finally dawned on me how truly close and how terribly stupid we really were.

I nodded, taking a step closer, to reassure him.

"You don't have to ask. You're my boyfriend, remember? Touch me wherever you want."

I felt my body temperature rise as his hand drew near, timidly, and placed itself gingerly on my collarbone. I shivered a bit, the temperature of his hand cool compared to the hot air that was trapped in the small bathroom. He pulled back a bit at my movement, but I relaxed again, and he replaced it. He ran it, painfully slow, over my collar, then down, going all the way down to my navel, where he switched and moved it around, adding the other hand and smoothing them over my hips, up my back. I shuddered as he touched the sensitive area, leaning into him, my hands coming up to support me there. I looked up at him, my mind racing, yet silent at the same time, all of my thoughts running into each other, resulting in a senseless cluster that not even I could decipher, one that I wouldn't bother with anyway. Perhaps I had been too pent up for too long, but whatever the reason, I just wanted to touch, to be touched.

“Tino, can Ah...”

“You don't have to ask.” I reminded him, kissing his jaw, wrapping my arms around his neck to help support my failing body. He gave me a look like he didn't believe me, but moved his hands down anyway, reevaluating my reaction with each inch he gained. But there was no negative reaction to be seen. I gasped a bit when he suddenly shot down, cupping my behind gently, experimentally, testing to see if I would pull away. Far from it, I pushed into the touch, groaning a bit at the foreign contact. My butt had always been a very personal place. Not even my mom was allowed to playfully spank me. But this was something I could trust Su-San with, had to trust him with. It was a new experience, but not unpleasant, the knowledge that it was such a forbidden thing making it that much more exciting. I groaned, quietly, almost inaudibly, kissing him again and again, our kisses deeper than before. Hesitant every step of the way, yet so excited to explore. An unsure slip of tongue, then a sudden desperation, desire for that same tongue. I couldn't get enough, couldn't give enough. Cared so deeply, but then not at all. Worried endlessly, yet threw all of my worries away just so I could savor this moment.

Bodies, hot and sweating, surrounded completely by steam now, yet shivering at a single touch. I was excited behind belief, wanting nothing more than to be completely his, in every single way. But Su-San is better than that. Has better restraint than I do. He pushed me away suddenly, not roughly, but enough to separate us, both panting, both longing.

“Tino... Ah...” More panting. I stared at him, longing, and now aching, all of my flushed, virgin shyness gone, replaced with something unfamiliar, something scary. I frowned, looking at myself in the foggy mirror, seeing my face, my body, both so obviously wanting. I looked at him apologetically, ashamed at having lost control at his mere touch.

“I'm sorry... I don't know what...” I tried, unable to finish.

“Don' be sorry... Jus'... How far are ya willin' to go?” He asked, just as breathless as me. I was surprised, but not repulsed. “Ah don' wan' to push ya too far too fas'. So Ah need need ya to tell me.” He added. I appreciated that he was keeping me in mind, but I was in disbelief that he actually felt just as strongly for me as I did for him. But how far WAS I willing to go? I wasn't ready for what Lukas was thinking, but I definitely needed something more than just kissing and innocent touches. I contemplated this, unable to arrive at an answer. He waited, and waited, and waited, then he seemed to remember, quite suddenly, that the shower was still running. He finished his previous actions of stripping, standing before me for a moment before undoing the button of my jeans and pulling them off. Both of us were... More than a little excited by our previous ministrations, but I took comfort in seeing that he was in the same condition. After just staring at me for a moment, he removed his glasses, stepped into the shower, and gestured for me to follow. I did, my face red yet again, remembering how to flush at the sudden attention to an area that hardly anyone but me had ever seen.

I stepped in and was met immediately by his arms, pulling me close to him. I yelped in surprise, but didn't struggle as he held me under the spray, just keeping my body against his, making no move to do anything else. So he was still waiting for an answer.

“S-Su-San?”

“Ah love ya Tino.” He said quietly.

“I-I love you too... You know that...”

“Ah know. Bu' Ah feel like ya don' understand. Can' understand. Ah love ya so much more than ya coul' ever know.” He continued, making me blush furiously.

“M-Me too!” I added pathetically, having nothing clever to say back to such a sweet confession.

“Ah jus'... Ah wan' ya so much, bu' we jus' started... Ah shouldn'...” He started, giving me one

of the most adorable puppy faces I had ever seen on him. (And adorable is not an adjective often associated with Su-San.)

“Well... Lukas said that we've practically been dating this whole time... And I think he was right. I mean, we didn't have a name for it, but...” I offered, rephrasing Lukas words. He seemed to contemplate this for a moment, then nodded, tilting my head up so he could kiss me. I returned it happily, getting up on tip-toes to make it easier for him. He wrapped his arms around my waist again, holding me so tight I came off the ground a little bit.

“Are ya sure?” He asked one more time, watching my face for any hint of a lie.

“Yes, I am.” I promised, earning a sweet kiss from him.

He moved forward till I was pressed against the wall. I gasped in surprise at the sudden movement, as well as the shock as the cold tile met with my flushed skin, but didn't shrink away from it. Before I could even really register the temperature, he was upon me again, kissing me feverishly, stroking my thighs, making me shudder. He stopped kissing for a moment to lean down to my ear and whisper.

“Tino, tell me if ya wan' me to stop. Ah will.” He promised, waiting till I nodded to continue. When he did, it was quick, inexperienced, his movements sudden and jerky even. Nothing like what I had ever read or seen in movies, like the infamous delicate stroking of the sides, or gentle trails down the chest. It was like he couldn't decide what to touch, and tried to touch everywhere at once, got tangled up. I grabbed his hands, forcing them to come to a stop, and replaced them on my hips, holding them there for a moment. He looked up, apologizing with his expression. I released his hands, and this time he slowed down, kneading softly at my hips, kissing my collarbone. This was better, more my speed. He slowly made his way down, this time squeezing my thighs, kissing my chest, a nipple, my stomach. I moaned lowly, lacing a hand into his short hair, not pulling, just holding it. He glanced up, asking permission, which I granted with the smallest of nods.

And suddenly all other sensations paled, seeming pathetic, weak in comparison to the shock of pleasure that shot through my body when he touched the most forbidden of places. I cried out his name, breathing heavily already. He looked up to gauge my reaction, saw that I was more than pleased, and continued, setting some kind of pattern of stroking, squeezing, driving me completely crazy. I groaned, moving my hand to his shoulder instead, looking for support for my shaking knees.

“T-Tino... Please... Ah...” He groaned, and my eyes flew open, looking down at him, faithfully pleasuring me while neglecting his own needs. I felt guilty immediately and quickly pressed a kiss to his lips, then reached down as well, drinking in the sharp gasp and gentle squeeze that I received as he got his first wave of pleasure. I was so embarrassed, feeling that part of Su-San in my hand, so different from my own arousal, so terribly forbidden, so very exciting. I did my best to mimic what he did, and eventually found what pleased him instead, setting my own pattern. I had never imagined that I would ever get to do something like this, hold him in my hand, have complete power over him, yet be just as powerless in his. It was a perfect thing for us to start with, easy, uncomplicated, without a fear of pain. Neither of us lasted too much longer after that, but he denied my orgasm a few times, cutting me off for a moment, obviously wanting it to be together. I moaned, cried, panted, every nature of thing one could possibly do at a time like this until finally, with a quick moment of blindness, it was over. I screamed, cried his name over and over, doing my best to continue for him, not realising that he had fallen over the edge a split second after me. Then my whole body went completely limp, unable to hold itself up after so much excitement and release. He just barely managed to catch me and hold me up, panting just as heavily as I was. He lowered us to the floor of the bathtub, letting me relax against the back of it while

hovering above me on his hands and knees.

It took me a while to catch my breath and come down from my little high, to actually see through the eyes that I was staring at him with. As soon as I did, I pulled him closer to me for a kiss. He kissed back eagerly enough, coming down so that our bodies were flush against each other. We stayed like that, laying in the tub for a time before either of us spoke.

“Su-San... That was amazing. Thank you.” I muttered, smiling lightly. This earned me a kiss. Really, this was perfect, not too much at once. It wasn't going all the way, so it didn't seem to me like it had come too early in the relationship, that we had gone too fast. It was a good place to start.

Eventually we got up and showered, the last remnants of our actions easily disposed of by the shower water. I realised about half way through that showering with him was suddenly a lot less awkward. I giggled, drawing his attention to me.

“Sorry. I was just thinking, I don't think I'll ever have a problem getting into a shower with you again!” I explained. He gave me a small smile, ruffling my soapy, wet hair. We finished bathing, then dried off. We both settled for just boxers, the formality of pyjamas seeming unnecessary, and slipped into bed. It didn't take us more than five seconds to find our way into a comfortable position, me tucked snugly in his arms, my nose brushing his collarbone, my legs intertwining with his as we both fell into a deep sleep in record time, only a moment for I love yous spared.

Chapter End Notes

Well, they finally got a little, how do you say, handsy? (Haha, a joke, get it? No? Oh well.) Maybe it moved a little fast, but honestly, if they didn't have some kind of sexual encounter, there would be no difference between them dating and them not. (I realised this as I was trying to figure out to show that they were, indeed, dating.) And you know how teenagers these days are. Ready for bed faster than you can blink. And I think it was a good milestone to pass in the thirtieth chapter! (THIRTY CHAPTERS! I DON'T EVEN...)

And I believe that is all I have for you tonight! Thanks for sticking with me guys, and I shall look forward to seeing you all again in the next update!

Love always, KuroRiya

KuroRiya

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Chapter 31

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

I woke up warm, not having to open my eyes to know why. Su-San was breathing evenly, obviously still asleep, and I had no intentions of waking him any time soon. There was a bit of light illuminating the room, even through the drawn curtains which, trust me, were pretty thick. This in mind, I guessed it was at least late morning for the sun to be shining so brightly. I was a bit surprised that Lukas and Mathias hadn't come to get us yet, or at least to see what was up, as they apparently thought of themselves as our “relationship-guardians.”

Su-San inhaled sharply, and shifted a bit, making me glance up. Sure enough, he was awake, his eyes lidded and sleepy, but still open. I offered him a small smile, wiggling until I was close enough to give him a quick kiss. When I pulled away, he made a disapproving noise, to which I rolled my eyes.

“If I gave you a better kiss, you'd get a huge taste of my morning breath! That would be gross! At least let me brush my teeth.” I scolded, and he relented, releasing the hold he had on me. He got up as well, and followed me to the bathroom, both of us shoving toothbrushes into our mouths in a bid to wash away the yucky flavor of a night's sleep.

I spat out the paste, rinsed my mouth out, and, before I could even turn to get dressed, he had me lip locked, held tightly to his chest. I was surprised by his insistence on the early morning affection, but more than happy to comply now that I wouldn't be breathing dragon breath into his mouth. He pulled back, his breathing a bit faster than usual, and squeezed me once more before releasing me.

“Wan' to go ge' breakfas'?” He asked. I nodded, following him out to the main part of the room to change. I pulled on a black tank top and jeans that had been cut off at the knee, definitely an old pair of Su-San's. That made me smile to myself, just for a moment. He had dressed as well, in a pair of loose fitting, straight-leg jeans and his trademark polo. I smiled, thinking back to our childhood days, realising that his fashion hadn't really changed over the years, unlike my own. I guess that opposites attract though. I mean, Lukas and Mathias were a perfect example, and apparently Su-San and I as well.

Now that both of us were dressed, we unlocked the door and headed out, the trickle of familiar students leading us back towards the lobby. We joined the line of hungry teenagers, made our breakfast choices, then looked around. I finally spotted Lukas, sitting at a table with Mathias, Emil, and Xiao. I gestured to Su-San, and he followed me to the table, sitting down to my right. Xiao was on my other side, and I gave him a smile as a form of welcoming him into our little circle.

“Hei! Good morning!” I said, not directed at anyone in particular. There was a quiet murmur of similar greetings from them all, except Mathias who practically shouted his. I chuckled, picking up my plastic spoon and taking a cautious bite of the oatmeal. Su-San had warned me about the school food, so I was a bit wary of anything that was made by the school, and I recognized many of the cooks setting out food as cafeteria workers from school. Yesterday I had eaten a lot of fruit, so I didn't have much to fear but...

To my fortune, the oatmeal wasn't too horrible, so I continued to eat it, spooning each bite into my mouth carefully so I wouldn't drip it on myself. I wasn't too keen on changing clothes this early in the morning. Lukas was the first to speak up, much to everyone's surprise.

“So, I thought we could all go to the water-park today, as today is supposed to be the hottest this week. Any objections?” He asked, and nobody raised their hand. He nodded, returning to his food.

“Awesome! I was starting to worry I brought my trunks for nothing! You're a genius, babe!” Mathias exclaimed, patting Lukas roughly on the back, knocking him into his food which crashed to the floor. I flinched, expecting for Lukas to blow up, or at least yell at Mathias, but he simply took his boyfriend's tray and began eating his food instead, as if it was completely natural. “Aw, babe, come on, don't take my food!”

“You knocked mine down, so I'm eating yours.”

“But they already closed up the line! I can't get anymore!”

“Then I guess you should start picking what you dropped off the ground, though I think the five second rule has long since been broken.” Lukas snapped, finishing off Mathias' food, much to the Dane's despair.

After breakfast, we all broke to go to our respective rooms and get ready for the day. I had to dig to the bottom of my suitcase to find my swim trunks, and I was a bit flustered by the time I did. Still, I switched my shorts out for the trunks, leaving the tank top on. Su-San had done the same, but changed the polo out for a blue t-shirt. He was shoving some clothes into a backpack that he had been smart enough to bring, and I smiled sheepishly as I brought my own change of clothes to him.

“Heeeei, so, I don't have a bag, and I was wondering if, you know, I could, maybe, just a little bit, put my clothes in with yours? They don't weigh very much, so it won't be that much heavier, so pretty please with salmiakki on top?” I asked, clasping my hands together as if praying. He stuck his tongue out.

“Hol' the Salmiakki, and ya've got yerself a deal.” He agreed, holding the bag open. I laughed, sticking my clothes in with his, and I saw that he had already packed towels. He then produced a bottle of sunscreen, which made me sigh. I hated the oily feeling of sunscreen on my skin, but my skin was, unfortunately, pretty pale, so I needed it. I opened it up, then smeared some on my face, my shoulders, arms, legs, and feet. Satisfied, I returned it to him, and he went through the same procedure, then he tossed it into the bag, zipping it up. He offered me his hand, and I took it quickly, letting him lead me from the room, my flip-flops making dull slapping sounds as I walked. I had always hated that about flip-flops, but they were definitely the cheapest and most convenient shoes for a day at a water-park.

Lukas and Mathias were waiting for us in the lobby, similarly dressed, and Lukas gave us a pointed look as we approached, hand in hand, but chose not to comment. He explained that Xiao and Emil were on the second floor, so it would take them a bit longer to get down to us. So we waited, making small talk, commenting on what we were hoping the water-park would have. Finally, Emil and Xiao emerged from the hallway, joining our little group, and we headed out.

It was another one of those few places that required a short bus ride, so we walked to the bus stop and waited for it to come, then piled in when it did. We chatted idly, not really having much to talk about, but trying to fill the silence. I couldn't help but notice how close Emil was sitting to Xiao, how his face held a little tint of pink the entire way there. I guess it made sense. They were both so bored looking all the time, maybe they found interest in each other. Enough to develop a crush, at least.

The bus let us off about three blocks away, so we had to walk the rest of it. The dissonance created by six pairs of flip flopped feet nearly sent me over the edge of sanity, but I endured and, before I even knew it, we were there. They ushered us through the entrance once we had shown our tags, giving us three keys for lockers that were to hold our bags. We dropped them

off, then headed in, none of us sure where anything was, all of us just veering to our left and hoping for the best.

“Emil, did you put sunscreen on before you left?” Lukas asked, suddenly turning to his younger brother. Emil groaned, nodding. “Yes mother.” He said sarcastically. I chuckled, glad that I had remembered to do so as well, thanks to Su-San. Granted, I would still probably burn before the day was over, but at least I tried.

We stopped at the first thing we came to, a relatively small water slide with several lanes, that I was confident I could easily handle. Not having any better ideas, we all got in line and waited our turn. As luck would have it, we all got to go at the same time, and Mathias decided to make a race of it, though none of us truly participated. One point Emil, zero everyone else, negative three for Mathias due to a cocky technicality.

After getting off, we began walking the same path from before, and, after coming to a crossroad and arguing for a brief moment, we all decided to part ways instead of fighting. Lukas and Mathias went to the right, and Su-San and I to the left. Xiao and Emil had shrugged, deciding they wanted to go to the wave pool and chill out, so they followed behind Lukas and Mathias. We promised to meet up around two to go to the rides that required a lot of people on one raft.

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Turns out that two was a little too late. Su-San and I had finished with most of the stuff that didn't require a group, and found ourselves with little to do. The worst part was that it was only one. Like Xiao and Emil before us, we shrugged and made our way to the wave pool. If all else fails, chill in the wave pool. I could smell it as we came closer, the chlorine likely stronger in the larger pool of water.

When we got there, the water was moving gently, the waves small and predictable. We didn't hesitate to wade in, going out to the deeper part so that we could actually pretend to be swimming. Color me a surprised Finn when I nearly swam right into Emil. I had begun apologizing profusely when I realised it was him, then I chuckled, offering a small hei.

“Hey yourself. Have you seen Xiao? I lost him the last time the big waves came through, and I haven't had much luck with finding him with this mass of people in the water.” He explained, I shook my head, glancing around

“No, I haven't. Uh, one question Emil... Have you two been in the wave pool this whole time?”

“Huh? Oh, no. We got out earlier and went down a few slides. But we don't have to walk in the wave pool, so we came back. Figured we'd kill time till two.” He assured. Well, as long as they went down at least a few...

“Joo, us too. I'll keep my eye out for Xiao. You're sure he didn't get out?”

“Maybe he did. Thanks.” And with that he began heading back to the shallow water, doing 360's every few steps. I smiled quietly to myself at their little relationship, developing right before my eyes, then turned back around to make my way over to Su-San. He spotted me, and met me halfway.

“Was tha' 'mil?” He asked, looking in the direction that the blonde had gone.

“Yep. He lost Xiao, somehow, and asked if I had seen him.”

“Oh, ja, Ah jus' saw 'im...” He said. I blinked for a moment, then sighed.

“Of course you did. I guess I should go tell Emil...” I replied, turning back around.

“Nej. Xiao wen' after 'im. 'S okej.” He informed me. I smiled in relief,

“Oh, okei! Well, that saves me a trip, I guess! I hope they find each other though...”

“Ja. Cute.”

“Exactly! I bet you those two end up together by the time we get back home!”

“Hm, Ah agree, so i's no' much of a be'.”

“Well... I guess not. Still, my Finn sense is tingling. I can taste the love in the air!” I proclaimed.

“Ya say tha', bu' ya had no idea ah loved ya fer... Ten years?” He pointed out. I blanched.

“W-Well, um... My Finn sense doesn't work on me! I mean, you know? Uh...” I tried to explain it logically, and failed. He shook his head, the corner of his lip twitching up just a bit, before he swam over to me and wrapped his arms around my shoulders, pulling me close to him. He pressed a kiss to my forehead, then rested his face there for a moment. I was worried about us drowning for a moment, when I realised that his feet could touch the bottom. I scowled, realising how much of a height difference there really was between us.

“Wha's wrong? Do ya no' like bein' kissed...” He asked, his face looking a bit worried.

“Oh, no! I was just mad that you're so much taller than me! I love kisses!” I assured, wiggling a bit so that I could give him one, just to prove my point. His lips tasted a bit like chlorine, not very surprising. He seemed a bit smug as I pulled back, and I rolled my eyes. “You know, I could totally hit a growth spurt some time, and I could be taller than you! You wouldn't be so big then, now would you?” I growled.

“Actually, Ah'd still be bi', ya'd jus' be bigger.” He pointed out.

“Oh, just hush up and swim with me! The big waves are about to come.” I moaned. He let go of me, observing the life guard that was pulling a lever up, one that I had assumed would trigger the more rapid water. Sure enough, they blew a whistle, warning weaker swimmers to migrate towards the shallower end. I steeled myself for the onslaught of fake waves about to come, Su-San doing the same. They came soon after, crashing over our heads. I swam up, breaking through the top for a breath, calculating when I needed to jump to stay above the next one. This continued for a good ten minutes before they pushed the lever back down, the waves returning to their smaller form. I turned to Su-San, rather proud of having survived the harsh waves. I mean, really, one does not simply go into the wave pool and expect to make it out in one piece. I'm sure that the lifeguards have their hands full, having to save people like me, those who overestimate their abilities.

We milled about a bit longer, then crawled out of the water, having to steady ourselves when we finally found solid ground. Once we could walk again, we located a couple of chairs, collapsing into them, prepared to relax until two. We still had about thirty minutes to kill, and my legs were thoroughly against getting back into the wave pool. Su-San stayed up longer than I did, opening an umbrella to give us some shade, a very good idea. Fair skin and the sun don't get along very well, and Su-San and I were both on the pale side of the melanin spectrum.

He sat down next to me, stretching his limbs out fully on the long chair, sighing in content as he did so. I chuckled, reaching over and taking his hand, letting them fall between us. He turned his head to look at me, his face a bit softer than it usually is, his gaze making my heart flutter like a bird about to take its first flight. I smiled, just a bit, to let him know that I didn't mind the gaze, my cheeks feeling a bit warm to me. He closed his eyes then, and, after waiting to make sure he wouldn't open them again, I did the same. The sunlight dulled to a faint red glow, just barely piercing the skin of my eyelids. My eyes seemed to appreciate the small rest, and I only realised just then that they had been aching a bit. I reminded myself to look on the bright side though; at least I wasn't albino. (Poor Gilbert.)

My hand was warming quickly in Su-San's, my fingers twitching just a little every once in a while, showing my excitement, that which I held for becoming so much closer to Su-San. It didn't surprise me that it hadn't worn off. After dreaming for ages, years, for nothing more than exactly what I had right now, at this moment... Well, let's just say that I would likely be

giddy for years to come.

Su-San gave my hand a squeeze, making me open my eyes to look at him. We stared for a moment, nothing else mattering, before he leaned over and stole a kiss. I giggled playfully, doing the same before he could pull back.

"I love you, Su-San." I announced quietly, my torso still leaning to the left so that I could hover my face close to his. He made an affirmative sound in his throat before deciding to verbalize instead.

"Love ya too, Fin." He replied, giving my hand a squeeze.

"Aww, well aren't you two just a Kodak moment waiting to happen!" I got a start, my whole body jumping at the loud voice. I looked up to find Mathias, staring down at us with a huge shit-eating grin on his face. I blushed fiercely but didn't let go of Su-San's hand.

"Oh hush! Like you can even talk! You and Lukas are all over each other most of the time!

Uh... So where is Lukas?" I asked, only then realising that he was no where to be seen.

Mathias without Lukas... That could be the beginning of World War Three...

"He went to get some ice cream. He doesn't handle heat very well, and he figured it'd help him cool off." He explained, pointing to an ice cream stand not too far off. If I squinted, I could just barely make out Lukas' blonde hair.

"Oh... Well, alright. Are you guys almost done with all of the small stuff? We ran into Emil and Xiao, and they were ready for the group stuff too."

"Yeah, we were coming here to kill time. Let Norge eat his ice cream, then I'm sure we can go. Anyway, I have a question for you two, and Lukas would elbow me in the ribs if he heard me ask it, so I'm gonna do it now!" He exclaimed. I braced myself for the worse, getting a feeling that this was going to be bad. "So, you two like, fucked last night and stuff, so I wanted to know what it was like for you. I mean, me and Norge were kind of in the same situation as you two are, we were just younger, so, like, was it the same as our first time? We just kind of... Fucked one night, you know? It just kind of happened. Was that how it was for you two?"

At that point I was hiding my face in my hands, not even able to look him in the eye.

"Mathias, we didn't... We didn't really..." I tried to explain myself, but I couldn't make the words come out.

"We didn't 'fuck' las' nigh'." Su-San added, trying to help.

"Pft, whatever. You guys did something." He persisted. I groaned, bringing my knees up, just wanting to disappear. A very sharp Norwegian elbow would come in very handy right about now.

"Ow! Oh come on!" Mathias shouted, making me open my eyes. Looks like my prayers were answered, if Mathias' now sore ribs had anything to say about it. I gave Lukas an appreciative look, then he turned to Mathias.

"Quit pestering them. Some people like to keep their sex life private. While I may not have that option due to my choice in partner, I think you at least owe it to them to keep your nose out of their business." He snapped. He glared at his boyfriend for a few seconds, letting the taller squirm under his gaze, before sitting down in the chair next to me, sighing. "I'm so hot I can't even stay angry enough to glare at him... Ugh" He whined, taking a bite from the cone of ice cream that he had been holding. Now that I was looking, his face was a bit flushed.

"Are you okei? You aren't going to have a heat stroke or anything, are you?" I asked, legitimately frightened. (In my defense, I had one in elementary school. We were running the mile outside, though there was a heat advisory, and I only got about a quarter of the way through before I collapsed.)

He rolled his eyes, fanning his face with his free hand.

“Yes, Tino, I'm going to have a heat stroke, and die. Clearly I'm at risk.” He replied, the sarcasm dripping from his words. I stuck my tongue out, crossing my arms over my chest. “If you collapse, I am definitely not going to help carry you to the hospital!” I promised. He let out a quiet chuckle at that, returning to his ice cream.

We all chatted absently, and eventually Emil and Xiao joined us, both finishing off a Popsicle. Turns out that, after getting separated in the wave pool, Xiao elected to buy them both a frozen treat. Seems Emil had the same idea, as that's where they found each other again.

Once the three had finished their cool sweets, we left the wave pool and found a line for one of the group rides. There were about ten of these to go through before we left, so there was still quite a bit of day to get through.

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Needless to say, we were all pretty much exhausted by the time we left, around six. We hadn't even bothered with changing clothes, opting to walk home instead of riding the bus. We were hoping to stumble across a decent restaurant on our way back, about half-way between so we would be at least mostly dry by the time we got there. We had only about ten minutes left to walk when we finally found a good place to stop and eat. A small Chinese buffet, not very crowded, and casual enough that we didn't feel too awkward as we waltzed around in our swimming suits. We set to it just like six teenage boys would, practically eating the entire buffet, counter and all. But we tipped nicely, so I doubt they much cared. After dinner, we finished the trip back to the inn, and went our separate ways. It was still relatively early in the evening, so I wondered what Su-San and I were going to do until it was late enough to call it a day. Su-San and I changed into our pyjamas, then cuddled on the bed for a while, whispering sweet words to one another as they came. How fortunate was I to have this privilege? To be allowed to snuggle up in his arms, rest my head against his collar bone, to press kisses to his jaw. And even more, have that affection returned! I didn't get to wonder long though.

There was a knock on the door, and I could hear the unmistakable sound of Lukas and Mathias having an argument on the other side. They were keeping their voices low though, so I couldn't quite make out what they were saying. Su-San got up to open the door, letting the other two in. They had stopped talking as soon as the door had opened, looking awfully guilty, as if we had caught them doing something they weren't supposed to be. They came in when Su-San stepped aside, and Lukas sat a paper bag down on our small table. I heard the clunk of something glass as it hit the hard wood of the piece of furniture, and couldn't help but look at it curiously. Lukas cleared his throat, grabbing my attention.

“Well, Mathias and I were thinking, and we decided that you two getting together was cause for a celebration. ...Don't ask where we got this.” He warned, grabbing the bag from behind him and opening it. To my surprise, he pulled out a bottle of red wine, and discarded the paper. “We don't drink very often, but this is kind of a special occasion. And what the teachers don't know won't hurt them.” He pointed out, opening the bottle. I stared at it in awe. Truth be told, I've never had a drink in my life, and I was a bit scared. Lukas offered the bottle to Su-San first. He glanced at me, and I returned the gaze, both of us unsure. But hell, why not? We didn't have school in the morning, no parents to notice that we had done it, what was there to stop us?

He took the bottle and took a small drink from it. His face didn't convey much, so I had no idea what to expect as he handed it to me. I looked at it, still hesitant, but brought it to my lips. If Su-San could do it, then I could to!

I tipped the bottle, letting a bit of the liquid run into my mouth. It was fruity, kind of like

grape juice on steroids, with a hint of something sharp that shocked my tongue. But I guess it wasn't unpleasant.

Next it went to Lukas, who took a much larger drink than Su-San and I had, probably more than both of us put together. He then passed it back to Su-San. Mathias decided to step in at that moment, questioning why he hadn't gotten his turn.

"Because you act stupid enough without the alcohol." Was Lukas' dry reply. I giggled, taking the bottle from Su-San again, taking my turn, then holding it out for Lukas. Mathias had his hand around it before Lukas could even think to take it, and quickly took a large drink for himself.

We continued on like this, passing between the four of us, trying our best to keep it from Mathias. I definitely noticed the change in our demeanor as the night crept along. Lukas got around to telling jokes, and even Su-San chuckled a few times. Lukas and Mathias stayed long after the bottle was empty, and we continued to laugh through the night.

Chapter End Notes

Alright, so... They got drunk?

Anyway, while I was still writing this, and only posting to FF.net, I had a contest to have a cover designed for the story. Here are the results of that contest:

1st place: ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/favourites/#/d58n678 Tora-Star

2nd place: ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/favourites/#/d56xt26 Chiaramelacarne

2nd place: ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/gallery/#/d5fwyt1 Sarkastisk. Korp. Klo

And everyone else! Even if you didn't place, don't think that your art isn't cherished!
BECAUSE IT IS!

Ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/favourites/#/d5b7fvk Zexionienzo

Ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/favourites/#/d5flfck Bebe-Butterfly

Ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/#/d5fwzvg Terra Saltt

Ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/#/d5fx07e Terra Saltt

Ask-nstac.Deviantart.Com/#/d5fx0go gpahorses

I have some sad news: No Such Thing as Coincidence is drawing near its end. It hurts my soul to say it, but I think I need to wrap it up. Long story short, the conflict has been resolved... I'm seriously in tears as I type this. I mean, NSTAC has been with me for so long, helped me grow as not only an author, but as a person as well. I got the opportunity to meet so many new and interesting people, and it has been an experience unlike any I've had, or ever will have. This is so much bigger than anything I ever planned. In my mind, it was a short, concise little story, maybe five chapters long. Well, now look at it! Thirty chapters? That's unreal! More than I ever imagined that I could accomplish! I want to thank you guys for your everlasting support, and I hope you can understand my decision.

BUT! And yes, you read that right, I said BUT: I have an idea for a sequel. A volume two, if you will. So it's not really the end of their story, just a conclusion to one of the

story arcs. Would you guys read a sequel if I wrote it? Let me know what you think. And, just to give you hint about what it might be about, think COLLEGE!

Let me know what you think, please! And don't worry, there are still a few chapters yet to come!

Chapter 32

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

I woke up with quite a headache, to say the least. But, truth be told, it wasn't as bad as I had expected. Television programs always make it seem as though a hangover is a brain-splitting, migraine-esque pain, but it didn't feel that bad. Just a dull throb.

I opened my eyes slowly, letting them adjust to the light as I went. Once they were fully open and functioning, I lifted my head, looking around the room. I had to hold back the chuckle that this caused, for fear of waking the others.

I was laying with my head on Su-San's belly, which, as if to accentuate its position, growled.

I guess we'd be indulging in some food as soon as everyone awoke. Anyway, Lukas was resting his head on my collarbone, snuggling up to me as if we were a married couple. Had he mistaken me for Mathias? I stretched my neck to see, doing my best not to move Lukas in the process, and found the Dane; With Lukas' feet in his face, snoring, his mouth wide open.

This was entertaining enough, but, upon further inspection, I realised that we were all in mild states of undress. Mathias was in only his boxers and a tie, wrapped loosely around his neck.

Lukas had removed one of his socks, and one of his arms was out of his shirt. Su-San had retained his pants, but his shirt was nowhere to be found, and, to my surprise, he had acquired Lukas' missing sock. On his right hand. I myself had somehow pulled my shirt down so that it hung at my waist, my torso emerging from the collar.

How any of this happened, and how four teenage boys managed to get smashed off of one bottle of wine, I'll never know. It must have been a pretty high concentration. And to think, even Lukas and Su-San were affected. Somehow, those two came off as rather... sober. Like, those people that could down a whole bottle of Smirnoff and still sing the alphabet backwards while walking in a straight line. You get what I'm saying, I hope.

I relished in my little morning discovery, doing my very best to stifle my giggles, but it was pretty difficult. Still, it was also kind of a nice way to wake up. Truly, this morning summed up our relationships with each other pretty well. And, truth be told, I think getting drunk together was an amazing bonding experience. I felt closer to Lukas and Mathias than I think I ever had. And, if Lukas' head on my shoulder was any indicator, I think they felt the same.

Lukas was the next to wake, a sharp uptake of breath being my clue to his consciousness. He did much the same that I had, shifting his head to take in his surroundings. When he turned his face up to look at me, he jumped, the twitch of his body obvious to me. (Considering the fact that he was pretty much laying on me.

“O-Oh. Good morning Tino. Sorry, I'm not used to anyone waking up before me.” He admitted, though it was barely a whisper. He winced a bit after speaking. Seems his hangover was a bit worse than mine.

“Morning! And joo, I know. It's weird for me to wake up first, but it's been happening a lot here lately... How's your head?” I asked, just as quietly.

“Not too bad. Not “peachy,” but not awful. We really didn't drink very much, to be honest. I think half of the drunken stupor was just us wanting to relax. You know what I mean? We've been so stressed out, and a lot has happened recently, so it was nice to wind down and have a good time.”

“Joo, I know what you mean. It was definitely fun!” I declared, and he gave me a small

smile. Then he grimaced, glaring down at Mathias.

“...I think he's drooling on my feet. Yuck. You're a lot more comfortable to sleep on than he is.” He admitted, snuggling his face back into my collar.

“Really? Don't you loooooove sleeping on your boyfriend?” I asked, grinning. He sighed in response, stretching his arm over my torso, pulling me closer.

“I suppose I do. Honestly Tino, sometimes I wonder why I love that douche so much. But... There's just something about him. I've tried leaving him, I really have. One time I even went as far as to go on a few dates with another guy... But I always come back. I can't help myself. I know it seems like I'm in control, but, really, he's the one with me wrapped around his finger.” He explained, sounding a little exasperated. “It scares me a little that I'm so dependant on him. If he ever decided he was tired of me, tired of listening to me bitching at him, tired of being abused... I'd die. And I mean that. I don't think I'd survive if he left. I'd let myself waste away. And that scares me.” He continued. I pursed my lips, not sure how to respond to that. I wasn't prepared for such a heavy conversation so early in the morning. But Lukas needed some comforting, it seemed. And what else are best friends for?

“...Lukas, I don't think that's something you have to worry about. Mathias loves you to pieces. I know it sounds cheesy, but you guys complete each other! Imagine Mathias without you; He probably wouldn't have any friends. You're like... His filter. You keep him from saying and doing stupid things. Well... Some of them, anyway. Plus you've been together for ages! I'm surprised you aren't married!” I said, trying to sooth him. He was quiet for a while, but then he looked up at me.

“Actually, we're engaged.” He said, making me gape.

“W-What?” I questioned, glancing down to his fingers, noticing the lack of a ring. He seemed to have expected that though, and moved his hand to his neck, drawing my attention to the necklace that rested there. I had seen the chain plenty of times; As far as I could remember, he wore it every day. But he usually tucked it into his shirt, and I hadn't even thought to ask what was at the end of the chain. He pulled at the chain until his fingers wrapped around the pendant, which he then held up for me. It was, indeed, a ring. A lovely silver band with a vine design twisting around it; small, dark blue stones embedded, and one slightly larger stone at the top. It was amazing, and it made me insanely jealous, but in a good way. I was so happy for Lukas, but I definitely wanted a ring of my own now.

“Oh my god, Lukas! It's so pretty! I don't even have words to...” I paused. “Wait, if you're engaged, then why do you introduce yourselves as boyfriends?” I questioned, thinking back to first meeting Lukas, trying to remember any mention of engagement.

“Well, most people just assume. And... It's kind of a secret between us, you know? The only person I've ever told besides you is Emil. It's not that we're ashamed, it just makes it feel more intimate if not a lot of people know.” He tried to explain. I nodded, smiling.

“No, I totally get it! But wow! Do I get to come to your wedding someday?” The prospect of this excited me immensely, I won't lie. He chuckled.

“Of course you do. I doubt it will be any time soon, but I'd love if you'd be my best man.” He informed me. I practically glowed, a sudden wave of love for Lukas coming over me.

“R-Really? I'd be so honored Lukas! Oh my gosh, now I'm excited! I get to be... Oh, but Lukas, what about Emil?” I wondered, hoping he hadn't forgotten his own brother.

“I want him to be the ring bearer. He is the only family that I still speak with, and the only person who I could imagine giving me away. I'm not going to have him walk me down the aisle, but by having him deliver the rings, he technically has the choice of letting me marry Mathias, or not. I'm sorry, my wording is just awful today. It's difficult to explain this to you, but it makes sense in my mind.”

"You keep saying that, but I understand what you're saying. God, Lukas, I'm so excited! And you make me want to get married too! Oh, you are definitely going to my best man!" I gushed, a huge grin plastered on my face as I pulled him even closer to me. "...I wonder if Su-San would ever propose to me though..." I thought aloud, my face falling a bit. I hadn't really considered that. Sure, I had fantasized about being married to him, but getting engaged never really crossed my mind.

"Of course he will, Tino. He loves you more than... Well, I can't even come up with a good comparison. More than anything Tino. Just give it some time; you two just got together, after all." He assured me, shifting a bit. I nodded, clearing my head of any negative thoughts that were trying to surface.

"Joo, alright. Oh, but tell me about it! How did he propose? Was it amazing, and romantic, and..." Lukas sent me a look, making me clamp my mouth shut.

"Hardly. I mean, he tried to make it sweet. He brought me to a pinnacle over the ocean in the middle of the night. It really was a lovely night, and I honestly didn't mind being dragged out at an ungodly hour. Mathias is pretty impulsive so I must say, I've grown used to it. And it was perfect. He was sweet all night, and then all of a sudden he was on his knee, and my mind went completely blank. But before he could even pull the box out of his pocket, I hugged him. I mean, I was excited, okay?" His cheeks were flushed as he recounted his moment of weakness. I just smiled, nodding. "Well, it turns out that was a bad idea. He fell back a little, and the edge of the pinnacle gave out, so we both fell in. Lucky for us, the water was moving pretty lazily, so we weren't crushed, but it was absolutely terrifying. I was so flustered, it didn't really register in my mind that I wasn't going to die. We both swam away from the cliff, then towards shore. By the time we got out, we were both exhausted. Once we came down from the adrenaline rush... I... Um..." He seemed to be fighting himself, trying to decide whether or not to omit this part. "...I might have bawled like a baby. I don't need any comments! I thought I was going to die. A-Anyway, after we had calmed down, and had been laying in the sand for ages, I guess he remembered about proposing. He pulled the box out of his pocket. He sighed when he saw how wet it was, but when he opened it, the ring was fine. He slipped it on my finger, and that was that. I switched it to the chain a few days later though. Like I said, it's kind of a secret." He finished, closing his eyes. I blinked, then sighed. "That is such an awesome story! I wish I had a cool story to tell you too, but I don't..." I admitted sadly. He gave me a small smile, not bothering to open his eyes again.

"Don't worry, Tino. There's plenty of time or you two to make memories together. I'm sure your engagement will be memorable too." He promised, and we were quiet for a while.

"...Thank you, Lukas." I said quietly. He finally opened his eyes at that, giving me a look that said "you don't have anything to thank me for, but you're welcome anyway."

"Hmm... You know Tino, if you had gotten to me before Mathias, I might have married you." He announced, snuggling up yet again. I chuckled, petting his hair playfully.

"Oh yeah? Do you loooooooooooooove me?" I cooed, giggling.

"Oh, I most definitely do." He agreed, allowing himself a small chuckle. He was quiet for a moment, then his face split into a grin. "Would you like to see how jealous we can make our significant others?" He asked me, making me raise an eyebrow.

"Um, how exactly would we go about doing that?" I wondered.

"By doing pretty much exactly what we're doing now. I figure they'll wake up soon, and imagine their reactions when they find us like this." He replied, looking pretty smug.

"Ah, I see, I see. Well, why not? Let's get familiar, Lukas!" I agreed, shifting slowly so that I was no longer laying on Su-San's tummy, then turned to my side, drawing Lukas to me, letting our legs intertwine. It was strange, feeling his body pressed so closely to mine. It

dawned on me that, if I was really thinking about it, I had never really cuddled with anyone that wasn't Su-San. But it wasn't a bad thing; No. I rather liked the way that our bodies meshed. We were roughly the same size, so we fit each other pretty well. It was more of a mutual cuddle, as opposed to the role-based cuddling with Su-San. When I cuddled with him, I was always enveloped in his arms, held tight to his chest, obviously the submissive in the relationship. But with Lukas we shared in power. We enveloped each other. I decided, after much deliberation, that both were nice, but I had to admit to being more fond of Su-San cuddles. I mean, he IS my boyfriend. But, beyond that, being held left me with a lingering security, as well as satisfaction.

Lukas sighed with content, making me smile. He must have been thinking along the same lines as me. We'd have to do this more often, for sure. It was strange; We hadn't known each other for very long, but we just... clicked. And I was overwhelmed by how close I felt to Lukas at that moment. He was definitely my closest friend. (Now I can say that, as Su-San has been promoted to boyfriend!) It wasn't uncomfortable, like it should have been. No. We quieted ourselves, waiting patiently for either of the larger males to wake. After about ten minutes, Su-San finally stirred. I heard his breathing pick up, then he shifted. Next came a groan; that would be the hangover. He was quiet for a moment, then he sat up. I felt the bed shift, just a bit, as he looked around, most likely searching for me. I chuckled, knowing he wouldn't have a chance without his glasses. The bed shifted as he stretched out an arm to fumble for his eyewear. Eventually, I heard a clatter, then a clank, followed by another moan. He had dropped them to the ground. I felt a little bad, but kept my position, pretending to be asleep.

Again, the bed moved, accommodating to him bending over the edge to retrieve his glasses. I heard the telltale clicking of the glasses being picked up, and could practically see him slipping them onto his face tiredly, though my eyes were closed. The next thing I heard was a sharp intake of air, signaling that he had finally noticed us. He was quiet, giving no indicator of how he felt. But I didn't have time to ponder it, as Mathias woke, apparently with a start, as he choked on his snore. I felt him sit up at the end of the bed, then heard him whine lowly. "God damn, hangovers suck!" He cursed. He was quiet for a moment, then I felt a spasm. "F-Fuck! You scared the piss out of me, Waldy! You're scary as fuck to wake up to!" He exclaimed, too loudly to be polite. I didn't think that Su-San was scary to wake up to...

Granted, I had been doing it since I was six. I remember, the first time he stayed over, I woke up to find him already awake, staring at me as I slept. I produced a very unmanly scream, and started crying. (I was five! Give me a break!) He apologized profusely, then tried to help the situation by promising that his scary face would scare away all of the monsters. I then proceeded to cry for an hour in fear of monsters.

I can't remember when I stopped fearing him, really. At first I was, truly, terrified of him. But the more I got to know him, the more I realised that he wouldn't hurt a fly, let alone me.

Su-San made no indicator that he had acknowledged Mathias, and it was silent once again. I was starting to think that neither one of them cared about Lukas and I cuddling, but Mathias suddenly shouted a "hey!" making me jump internally, though I managed to hold still, keeping up my appearance of sleeping.

"What the... Since when do those two cuddle? Norge doesn't even like to cuddle! But he must have confused Tino for me! Yeah..." He reasoned. Su-San was still quiet. Lukas shifted a bit, pressing even closer, grumbling a bit in his feigned sleep, muttering my name quite convincingly. I could practically sense Mathias' deflation at the utterance. "What the fuck babe? Are you cheating on me... With Tino?" He wondered incredulously. Su-San hummed, and I felt him move, then there were fingers running through my hair. I sighed happily, glad

that he was finally offering me some attention.

"Ah don' think it's anythin' to worry about." Su-San, trying to sound reasonable. "They were drunk, an' they are bes' friends." He pointed out. Mathias didn't reply, likely contemplating this.

"Well... I guess you're right... And they do look pretty damn cute..." He added.

"...Ja..."

They fell to silence again, and it felt extremely awkward. That was not the reaction we had hoped to elicit, at all! And how were we supposed to end this? Should I pretend to wake up naturally?

"...I'm gonna take a picture!" Mathias announced, and I felt the bed give as he got up.

Picture? That was NOT in the job description!

"Don't you dare, you asshat." Lukas called, making me jump. I opened my eyes, looking to Mathias who had frozen in place, halfway to a pair of pants laying on the floor.

"Y-you're awake?" He questioned stupidly.

"Yes, I was the entire time." He replied, as if that wasn't a strange answer. Mathias seemed immensely confused, but returned to the bed.

"But then why didn't you say so?" He demanded, his brows furrowed. Lukas sighed, pulling me closer.

"Don't worry about it. You wouldn't understand, even if I did tell you." Lukas decided, sitting up. I too sat up, stretching, as I had been wanting to do since I first woke up. After that, I turned to Su-San, offering a sheepish grin.

"Morning!" I greeted happily, shuffling so that I was on his lap. I pressed a kiss to his cheek, wrapping my arms around his neck for some support. He snaked his around my waist, pulling me to him protectively, pressing a kiss to my temple.

"Mornin'." He returned, running his fingers up my back, forcing a chill to run down my spine. "Do ya know how Ah go' Lukas' sock on mah hand?" He asked, drawing my attention to said sock-clad hand. I giggled, shaking my head.

"It's a mystery! Looks like none of us are really built for alcohol, huh?" They all nodded in agreement. We fell into silence yet again, but it wasn't awkward; not really. It was a comfortable kind of silence. Lukas cleared his throat, drawing the attention to himself.

"Well, I personally want a shower, and I don't hate you two enough to leave Mathias here, so we'll see you later." He announced, pulling Mathias up by his hand. The left, shutting the door behind them. Su-San sighed as soon as they did, pulling me closer.

"...Ah really hope tha' Ah was righ' in thinkin' tha' ya aren' cheatin' on me with Lukas..." He mumbled. My eyes widened a fraction as I glanced up at him. He HAD been worried!

"Of course not! Lukas is just my friend, you know that!" I assured, kissing his jaw several times. He scrutinized my face before he finally accepted it, hugging me tightly.

"Okej. Ah love ya, Fin." He declared, making me flush a bit.

"I-I love you too, Su-San! Like, a lot! I promise!"

He smiled, ruffling my hair, then drew me up, much like Lukas had done with Mathias.

"Le's shower."

"Okei. Joo... Actually, I'm pretty gross... When's the last time I showered? Ugh, don't answer that question! Let's go!" I exclaimed, taking the lead, dragging him into the bathroom. I turned on the water this time, letting it run so it would heat up. Su-San was already working on shimmying out of his boxers. But, true to my suspicions, I wasn't embarrassed about it anymore. I too began stripping, pulling the shirt the rest of the way over my hips, then removing the clothing from my lower half. I looked up once I was bare, and found Su-San staring at me, a faint pinkness to his cheeks. I smiled, slipping into the tub and closing the

curtain, pulling the stopper, letting the hot water fall on me for a moment.

Seems that Su-San was feeling a bit bashful today; he hadn't joined me yet. I stuck my hand out of the shower, curling my finger in a "come hither" motion. I chuckled as he obediently slid the curtain aside, stepping into the tub. I smiled, opening my arms, and he was quick to embrace me. Feeling his skin to mine, so close, so intimate... It made my head spin.

Definitely in a good way though.

"Uun, if you stay this close, I might have to make this a cold shower." I informed him. He replied with a kiss to my shoulder, a hand rubbing at my lower back as he bent me backwards just a bit. "S-Su-San! It's a bit early for this, don't you think?" I stuttered, the upper-hand having been taken from me quite effectively. He made a noncommittal noise, kissing at my collar now.

He backed me up, pressing me into the wall. I hissed as the cold tile met my sensitive back, arching up and away from it. But he pushed me till I was flush against both it and him, leaving me no room for movement. And the kisses never stopped, littering my shoulders, my collar, my chest. I moaned as he nipped at a particularly sensitive spot, somehow managing not to buck my hips.

"Su-Su--"

"Shh." He shushed, pressing a kiss to my lips.

"A-Are we always going to do s-stuff like this in the shower?" I wondered, receiving a small smile in return.

"Hmm. Somewhere else nex' time. Fer sure." He decided, returning to my chest, this time tweaking my nipples experimentally. I gasped, this time unable to keep my hips steady. He raised an eyebrow, mimicking the action with the other nipple, getting the same result. I panted, suddenly much more aroused, which confused me. I had played with my own nipples several times while masturbating. (Not an awkward topic at all, I know!) But I had never really gotten a reaction from it. But when Su-San did it... Well, that was apparently a completely different story.

He took one into his mouth, sucking and licking until I was on the brink of collapsing before he released it. I moaned at the loss of sensation, grinding forward again incessantly.

"Su-San!" I demanded, trying to coax him into stimulating me more. He stared at me for a moment, then locked our lips again, pulling me closer to him as he crushed our lips together. I returned it hungrily, doing my utmost to bring our lower halves together.

After some making out, he trailed back downwards, this time pressing kisses all the way down, giving some attention to my stomach, then my thighs. I watched him with bated breath, wondering if he was going to do what I thought he was. And I was right; The next thing I knew, I was screaming in pleasure as his lips encircled a very sensitive part of me. My hands flailed wildly, trying to find something, anything to grab onto to steady myself. The wall had nothing to grip, so I eventually snaked my hands into Su-San's hair, moaning pathetically as he serviced me. I had never understood why blowjobs were in such high demand, but I guess that was because I had never had one.

The inside of his mouth was indescribable, absolutely hot, and it seemed he knew exactly how to pleasure me, as I was on the brink of coming after mere seconds.

"A-Ah! Su-San, I... What about-Ooooh god..." I tried to speak, but the words were far from coherent. I looked down, hoping to convey my question to him without words, but found he had answered it already. One of his hands was on my hip, holding me steady as he worked, but the other was wrapped around his own arousal, pumping in time with his ministrations on me. I groaned, the sight a little too much, and squeezed my eyes shut. I didn't last much longer after that, though I was desperately trying to hold back. It became too much, and I finally

gave in, giving Su-San little warning before I came with a strangled, garbled pronunciation of his name. He didn't have time to draw back, and he didn't spit it out, so I knew that he swallowed it, a fact that filled me with grief, but happiness at the same time. He came right after me, groaning my name as well. I shuddered as I came down, letting him lower me slowly to the floor of the tub as I caught my breath. As soon as I was breathing at a semi-normal rate again, I whined lowly.

“I-I'm sorry! I didn't mean to... In your mouth... I...” I blushed, trying to hide my face with my hands. He pulled them away, forcing me to look at him. He pressed a kiss to my lips, and I flushed further as I noticed the unmistakable taste of my own release. That was something I had never planned on tasting in my life... Alas, there was no helping it.

Su-San shifted, laying himself against the back of the tub, then pulled me to sit in his lap, making it so we could both lay out in the tub and let the water fall on us from the showerhead above. With a bit of effort on his part, he managed to pull the stopper for the bath, and water slowly began collecting below us. I sighed in content, loving the feeling of being held from behind this way. Who knew a bath could be such a lovely experience? I'd have to make a point of sharing them with Su-San a lot more often.

Chapter End Notes

So, really off topic: Fourteen Days, have you guys read it? I know of a few NSTAC readers that have checked it out, but most of them are new readers! I'm actually pretty proud of my work with Fourteen Days, so it would be awesome if you could give it a shot! Oh, and if you're wondering what the fuck I'm talking about, it's another SuFin story that I write. It's quite a bit different than NSTAC though, so it (hopefully) won't be boring!

Ah, I'm totally starting to ship NorFin. Not as a couple, but definitely as besties. Okei, definitely as a couple. Hmm... Maybe I'll write a story where they're friends with benefits? Lolz, we shall have to see about that. Oh, WAIT, I already wrote it!

Chapter 33

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

We relaxed in the shower-turned-bath for at least an hour. What can I say, we were tired after our early morning escapade! When we finally managed to heave ourselves out of the porcelain tub, we trudged back into the main room and pondered the pros and cons of returning to bed, at least for a few hours. But we decided against it, forcing ourselves into clothes and out the door. It was pretty late in the morning, about eleven forty five, and we were power walking in an attempt not to miss breakfast. Of course, with my luck, we did. I frowned as I read the little sign saying that no more breakfast would be served, then turned back to Su-San expectantly. Surely he would have a plan... Su-San always had a plan. He sighed, taking my hand and leading me out onto the street. I followed without question, letting him take me wherever he pleased.

After walking down a few streets and turning about three corners, I couldn't help but smile at Su-San's pure amazingness. We were standing in front of a small breakfast restaurant, much like an IHOP, but not actually an IHOP. Regardless, they'd have something tasty to eat, and I was hungry, so it would do, off-brand or not.

We went in and a waitress lead us to a cozy booth towards the back, taking our drink orders and rushing off. I flipped through the menu, though it wasn't really necessary. Breakfast places all serve the same things. I decided on an omelet today, as the breakfasts at the inn lacked eggs. Still, pancakes are a classic...

"Heeeeee, what are you going to get?" I drawled playfully. He rose an eyebrow and closed his menu.

"...Pancakes." He replied. I grinned, stacking my menu on top of his.

"Perfect! And you're totally going to let me have a bite like a good boyfriend, right?"

"Hmm."

"Awesome!" I announced, just as the waitress returned. She set our drinks down in front of us, then asked us our orders. After confirming our choices, she was off yet again. I grabbed my orange juice, drinking about a third of it in one go before sitting it back down. Su-San, on the other hand, was taking his time with his coffee, nursing it as if it was the holy amrita. But that's how he always is, I suppose.

We chatted for a few minutes before the waitress returned with our meals, and were quick to set into those. Turns out we were both pretty hungry.

We were on our way back to the hotel around one, when we ran, almost literally, into Matthew. I barely stopped Su-San from crushing the poor little guy. He, once again, seemed surprised that I had noticed him at all, but he didn't mention it this time.

"Oh, hello again. Tino, right?" He asked. I nodded, giving him a smile.

"That's right. How are you?"

"Alright. A bit hot out in this sun, but I'll survive. You?" He returned.

"I'm good. Just finished breakfast. Are you waiting for someone?" I wondered, realising just then that he was standing alone on a corner. Unless Matt was a hooker, it was fair to say that waiting was probably the case.

"Yeah. Ludwig is taking Feleciano on a date, and told Gilbert to leave him alone. And... Well, Gil was looking really down. Not like a normal-person down, but I could tell, you know?"

Anyway, I asked him to come to the beach with me today. I guess it was a bit of a two sided request though... I kind of forgot that he's albino for a second... But he agreed, so I'm just waiting for him to get ready." Matthew explained, hiking the strap of his bag up on his shoulder. "He's taking a long time though... I suppose putting on that much sunscreen would take a while... Anyway, are you guys going to the concert tonight?" He asked, looking up at me.

"Concert?" I questioned, my eyes lighting up. It had been ages since I'd been to one!

"Yeah. You haven't heard? It's not, like, a band. It's a bunch of different people, from all over. Kind of like a mini Eurovision? But with singers from all over."

"Oh, that sounds cool! Where is it?"

"Um... Well, it's hard to explain. If you want to go, we could meet up here around six. Gil and I are leaving then." He offered. I turned to Su-San, doing my best to make puppy eyes, not that I needed to. He'd say yes even without me asking. He nodded his consent, and I grinned.

"Awesome! We'll meet you here then!" I promised.

"Alright. See you then." He agreed, smiling. I waved, returning to the path that led to the inn. We passed Gilbert on his way out, obviously covered head to toe in a thick coat of SPF-over9000. I gave him a wave, which he returned with a grin.

Once back inside, we ventured towards Lukas' room. We were going to knock, but a stream of curses from Lukas, followed by a few rather... risqué noises stopped us. Blushing, we hurried in the other direction, vowing silently to never speak of the incident again.

Finding ourselves alone until six o'clock, Su-San decided that today we would go on a date. I was quite fond of this idea, and was quick to agree. But that raised the question; where would we go? Well, when all else fails, result to aimless walking!

We had explored a few streets before we finally came across something interesting to occupy our time. In a relatively large park we found a festival going on. On a sign near the entrance, it labeled itself as the "Multicultural Festival" in bold letters. It seemed that Faiacre had a knack for a mixing of cultures. We entered, very curious about the whole thing.

The first little section was set up like a good-old American fair. There was kettle corn, funnel cakes, cotton candy, as well as photo-ops (the ridiculous kind with the heads cut out.) several little shops, and some games like use-the-cork-gun-to-shoot-the-two-dimensional-duck. After me spazzing out and wanting to buy everything all at once, Su-San suggested that we walk through the whole thing before we decided on anything. I agreed, smiling sheepishly.

The next little part was Spanish, and I could smell the spicy food before we even had a chance to enter the area. It was mostly food in this area, but there was a little plaza area where they were teaching visitors to dance to saucy music. I contemplated that for a moment, wondering how likely it was that I would break bones should I participate.

After that came a combination of all of the Northern European areas. I was a bit put off that all five had been crunched together, but I was impressed by the fact that they were there at all. There was a lot of obnoxious Viking gear to be had, Swedish meatballs to be sampled, but what caught my eyes was... Wait for it... A MOOMIN STAND. I squealed like the little teenage girl I am and launched myself in that direction. Su-San made a noise of surprise, but I think he realised what was happening when he saw the cart. I had already been trifling through all of the wares for several seconds before he could catch up.

"Oh my gosh Su-San! Look! MOOMINS! They have shirts, and stuffed trolls, and cups, and..." I gushed happily, gesturing to each thing as I listed it. Su-San sighed, taking his wallet out.

"Pick somethin'." He commanded, and my eyes widened.

"F-For real? You're going to get me something? Oh my gosh, what a tough decision!" I

moaned, looking at all of the merchandise. If only I was a millionaire! It took some deliberation, but I somehow managed to narrow it down to two items. I held them out to Su-San.

“Which do you think? This stuffed Moomin, or the shirt?” I asked. He looked between the two, blinked, then grabbed them both, handing them to the man running the shop. Before I could even raise protest, he had paid for them, and handed me a bag.

“H-Hei! You said just one!” I pouted, taking the bag regardless. He shrugged, pocketing his wallet.

“Ah sai' pick one. No' tha' ya could only have one.” He pointed out. I blanched, my mouth open with words I didn't speak.

“Well, joo, but... I mean, when you say... Ooh, never mind. I don't know why I even bother trying to argue with you!” I exclaimed. “...But thank you.” I whispered, smiling. He returned it with his own, barely noticeable twitch of the lips, then leaned down for a kiss. My eyes closed for the brief moment that our lips met, then fluttered back open when he pulled away.

“Hm... I think that's a better present than the Moomin stuff... Okei, not quite, but it's close!” I decided, lacing my fingers with his. He gave a short chuckle, pulling me closer.

The next part was a mix of Asian cultures, Japanese towards the front and Chinese towards the back. This was pretty much the back of the park. After squinting a bit, I could see that the last little section was German. I wondered why it was towards the back, but after realising that almost all of the stands were selling alcohol, I understood.

“Hmm... All of this Japanese stuff is really super cute, isn't it?” I mused out loud, staring at a particularly pink hello kitty plush serving as a prize at a booth. Su-San nodded in agreement, pulling me in the opposite direction. I was curious about what had grabbed Su-San's attention, but it turned out to be a who, not a what. Looks like a wild Kiku appeared.

“Ah, Herro. How are you today?” He asked when he noticed us.

“Good. You're feeling better, I hope?” I questioned, remembering his rather sickly state after getting off of the roller coaster last time.

“Yes, thank you. Are you going to try on a yukata?”

“A what now?”

“Yukata. It is rike a kimono. We wear them in summer. This place will let you put one on and take a picture.” He explained, pointing to the building he had been standing in front of.

“Um... Like what you're wearing right now?” I wondered, looking at the kimono he was currently in.

“A-Ah, yes. Sorry, I forgot. I just bought this, actuarry.”

“I see! Well, it sounds like fun. You want to, Su-San?”

He agreed, and Kiku was quick to usher us into the building. Inside we found some Asian women, all chatting amoungst themselves in a language I didn't know, and could only assume was Japanese. They looked up when we entered, smiling professionally. But their smiles seemed to change when they saw Kiku. More real.

Kiku spoke to the women for a few seconds, the Japanese flying from his mouth rapidly as he explained something to them. He gestured to me once, then a few of the women nodded.

Only moments later, I was being ushered into a changing room, Su-San going the other way. I was confused, but didn't argue, allowing myself to be led into the small, curtained off box.

One of the women followed me in, offering me a seat. I took it, looking up at her with fear and awe. She came off as one of those no-nonsense kind of women.

“What is your favorite color?” She asked, flashing a smile.

“B-Blue?” I stuttered. She nodded, excusing herself. It only took a moment for her to return, a long box in her arms. She knelt to the ground, then gently opened the box. I gasped as she

pulled the yukata out, the light blue fabric was absolutely breathtaking. A pretty white floral pattern decorated the bottom of it, as well as the ends of the sleeves. After pulling it out she laid it out, then walked to my side. Without so much as a warning, my shirt was gone. I yelped in surprise, covering my chest with my hands. The woman chuckled, returning to the kimono. She picked it up, draping it over my shoulders.

I relaxed, slipping my arms through the sleeves. She positioned my arms so that they were straight out to the sides. It didn't take long for her to have me all tied up and ready to go. But before I could step out of the changing room she pushed me back down, removing my shoes and switching them out for a pair of sandals. Finally she ushered me out, leading me back towards the front of the building. Berwald was already there, also dressed in the Japanese style.

His, however, was much different from mine. It was a dark blue, and the pattern was more geometric, rendered in black. I realised, too little too late, that mine was much girlier than it probably should have been. That's what I get for zoning out while an unfamiliar Japanese woman clothes me...

We were shuffled into a different room, this one with an old fashioned camera. Kiku was waiting in here, speaking with a man behind the camera, but he was silent when we entered. He offered a small smile to me.

"You rook nice." He commented, giving Su-San a small nod as well. I blushed, looking down at what I was wearing. Flowers. Right. Boys aren't exactly supposed to wear flowers...

Regardless, we were directed to stand in front of the camera, which we did. While the cameraman was getting ready, Su-San leaned down so that he could whisper to me.

"Ya look beautiful, Fin. Bu' Ah think Kiku told 'em to pu' ya in a girl's kimono."

"Joo, I figured that out when I saw yours... Sneaky little..." I was cut off by a flash, but to my surprise, it was from a certain Kiku and not the cameraman. I looked at him, an eyebrow raised. He grinned, putting his camera away. I was going to ask why on earth he had just taken a photo and what exactly he intended to do with it, but the cameraman said he was ready. A few smiles and flashes later, and I was back to being stripped by someone I didn't know.

Back in my own clothing (and comfort zone...) I returned to the front. Again, Su-San had finished before me, and he already had the pictures in hand. I rushed over to have a look as well. And, as much as I usually hate pictures of myself, I have to say, we looked pretty awesome! Kiku was also waiting, and waived goodbye to the ladies before we left. Once outside, I turned on him.

"Alright, so what was that?" I demanded, puffing my cheeks out. He only smiled, poking one.

"Werru, I was talking to my friend from Japan, and she said she wished she could see real life yaoi with two rearry attractive blonde boys. And so I made her dream come true. I wirru see you rator." He called, waving as he hurried off. I blinked as he left, turning to Su-San.

"Uh... Wha's yaoi?" He asked, raising an eyebrow. I flushed a bit, taking his hand.

"Nothing, don't worry about it. Why don't we go play some games?" I suggested, leading him to a booth.

-.-.+-.-.-

At around four thirty we returned to the inn with intentions of getting ready for the music fest that night. I mean, sure, I could have gone in my cutoff shorts, baggy shirt, and flip-flops... But there is something so anti-concert about that. Luckily, Lukas and Mathias were done fucking, and accepted our invitation to tag along. Lukas demanded that I come to his room after getting dressed, and I was too frightened of the consequences to even contemplate

disobeying.

Su-San and I took a collective thirty minutes to dress. (Su-San took about five, I on the other hand...) I opted to wear my new Moomin shirt because reasons. Hush up. Moomins are freaking awesome! Su-San opted not to comment, and walked me to Lukas' room. After knocking, Lukas opened the door, grabbing my arm and pulling me in while pushing Mathias out with one fluid movement.

"Trade you talkative boyfriends for a few minutes, Berwald. No matter what he says, don't feed him." He warned, then closed the door.

"You know, it seems like I'm getting led around a lot today!" I announced. Lukas shrugged, pulling me into the bathroom. I couldn't help but notice the ring of liner around his eyes, which made their blue color stand out that much more. Looks like Lukas has some skills. Their bathroom was identical to ours, down to the bathtub. I stared at it a moment, then flushed with the sudden memory of what Su-San and I had done in its twin... But then I realised that Lukas and Mathias had probably done even worse in this exact tub. I shook my head to dispel those thoughts.

"Nice shirt. Where did you get it? Forever five-year-old-Finn?" He joked, smiling.

"Hei! Shush! Moomins are the coolest thing in the world!" I shouted. He threw his hands up in surrender, backing off.

"Alright, alright, no need to yell. Go sit down." He said, pointing at the toilet. I did as I was told, then watched him pull a small bag out of a larger one that was sitting on the counter. Out of this he produced a thin pencil, which I eyed warily.

"...Um... So why exactly am I sitting on the toilet in your bathroom?" I questioned as he approached.

"Because I'm going to make you look fucking fabulous. Now quiet. By the time I'm done with you, Berwald will want to rip this little shirt right off of you. Those shorts too. Are those even legal in this country?" He wondered. I flushed, but held still while he outlined my eyes.

"Only in the Southern half." I replied, thinking myself horribly clever for even having a retort.

"Hmm. You have really pretty eyes, Tino. I'm sure you get that a lot, but up close..." He said lowly, concentrating as he spoke.

"Oh, um, thank you. But, if I remember correctly, Emil has violet eyes too..." I reminded him.

"I know. But I see his all the time. And they're... Different from yours. His are lighter, almost pink. I think he might be a little albino, but don't tell him I said so. He's all sensitive about it. But yours... I don't know. I like them though." He finished with the liner and returned to his little makeup pouch. He next produced an eyeshadow kit, but he shook his head, putting that one back. After digging a bit, he finally pulled a different one out and came back to my side. The eye shadow he had was in shades of blues and greens, and I raised an eyebrow.

"Um... Shouldn't you use purple?" I wondered, but he was quick to shake his head.

"No. You use the compliment to make them pop. Blue eyes wear brown eyeshadow." He pointed to himself and I noticed that, true to his word, he had a light brown layer on his eyelids. "People with green eyes use red or violet. I figure the opposite will work for you. Your eyes are violet, so I'll use green. Besides, your shirt has a lot of grass worked into the design, so it'll match. Now hush and let me make you even more beautiful." He snapped, and my mouth clamped shut.

I have to say, by the time he was done with me, I WAS looking pretty fabulous. I blinked at myself in the mirror, not quite sure if that total babe was really me. I guess makeup can work wonders for everyone, even chunky Finns.

Chapter End Notes

So, Music Fest next time, Joo?

Sorry, I know it's been ages! I'm at such a tough point with this story. It's getting hard to write, seriously. I don't know what it is, but I'll fight through it! It seems that a lot of SuFin authors are having a rough patch right now... Not a lot of stories updating recently, you know? Even a few hiatuses! That scares me a bit... But I've noticed that we all kind of update at the same time, so I really hope I can start it back up again. Fingers crossed!

So, just to give you a rough estimate, I'd say that NSTAC will probably be done right after they leave Faiacre. All good things must end, right? But like I said, sequel is planned. There might be some lapse in between the two stories though, so bear with me. Rawr.

I can't think of too much more to say, so I'll leave it at that. Ask pages are open, as always.

KuroRiya

九六りや

Chapter 34

While in the bathroom, the makeup had given me a little boost of confidence. However, as I faced the door of Lukas' room, it suddenly drained from me. What would Su-San think of it? Would he think I looked dumb, think me stupid for even trying? I shook my head, forcing the thoughts out. He was my boyfriend, so he obviously liked me, and he would think I looked GREAT. Stop worrying, you overly self-conscious idiot!

After my little internal pep-talk, Lukas opened the door, and waiting outside was a rather annoyed looking Su-San and a laughing Mathias. I was curious about what had happened between the two, but the thought was forgotten as Su-San turned my way. I was pleasantly surprised to see his jaw drop a bit as he stared at me for a moment. Even Mathias jumped in with a whistle.

I blushed, looking away from everyone. Well, I suppose I was right to think Su-San would like it. All was silent until Mathias gave Su-San a little shove, then took Lukas' hand and began walking towards the doors. Su-San and I followed after a small moment of awkward staring. We had been walking for a few seconds before his hand found mine and claimed it, stepping just a bit closer to me.

"...Ah know Ah sai' this once alrea'y today, bu' ya look beautiful. Amazin', really... N-No' tha' ya usually look ba'... Ya always look amazin', bu' today... Uh... Ah..." He stuttered, his cheeks slowly taking on a shade of pink. I chuckled, giving his hand a squeeze that I hoped was reassuring.

"It's alright, I know what you mean. Thank you." I said, pulling him down far enough to plant a kiss to his jaw. He was quick enough to turn his face and catch my lips before I could pull them away. I smiled, but missed a step thanks to the distraction. I would have fallen to my death (read: a bloody nose) had Su-San not caught me.

"Good reaction time, Su-San! I think that was .003 seconds faster than last time! You're improving." I joked, allowing him to set me back upright again. He rolled his eyes, taking my hand once more.

"Ya can' kiss an' walk... Ah'll have to make a note." He mumbled. I frowned as I looked up to him.

"Aw, come on, give me a chance! It was my first try!" I protested, but he shook his head.

"No' worth riskin' yer life. Ah'd rather stop." He announced. I pouted for a while, but didn't argue any further, not wanting to start a petty fight.

We had made it to the door by then, and I could see Matthew and Gilbert waiting at the corner, as promised. I waved as we approached, and Matthew returned it, along with a smile.

"Hei! Sorry, I guess I might have invited a few others. Do you mind?" I asked, though I doubted he cared much about the subject at all.

"No, not at all." He replied, giving the group of us another smile.

"Thanks! Well, you probably already know, but this is Mathias and Lukas." I pointed to each in turn. "And guys, this is Matthew." I finished. Lukas and Mathias both looked at Matthew as if they had never seen him before, then turned to me.

"Um... Where did you meet this dude? Is he with a different school?" Mathias asked. I blinked, waiting for his big, goofy grin to come on to show that he was joking. But it didn't come, and it remained awkward for several seconds.

"A-Are you serious?" I demanded, hoping he wasn't. "He goes to our school!" I explained, a

little louder than needed. Both of them looked like they didn't believe me.

"He's right! Mattie's even in your class!" Gilbert piped up, drawing their attention to him.

"Wait, aren't you and Tino, like, mortal enemies or something? Like, didn't he totally kick your ass the other day?" Mathias asked, more than a little bluntly. I blanched, then tried to explain, much too fast, and with many senseless gestures.

"N-No, we made up, and now we're friends! I mean, I think we are... Aren't we? Well, you still haven't tried to get revenge, so I'm assuming so. Or would acquaintance be a better word? A-Anyway, we're not angry anymore. Well, I wasn't angry to start with, but you could have been. I mean, I was really rude! And actually, I don't really know why you haven't tried to beat me up. It's only fair! But that doesn't mean that I want you to! I'm not into that kind of thing, if that's what you're..."

"TINO!" Mathias, Lukas, and Berwald all snapped at the same time, making me jump.

"A-ah, sorry, I was ranting, wasn't I? Sorry!"

Lukas shook his head, taking charge of the situation.

"Alright, well, introductions are through, so is everyone good to go? And I believe it was Matthew that was leading the way, correct?"

"Yes." Matthew replied, gesturing for us to follow him. We fell into a line of pairs, Su-San with me, Mathias with Lukas, and Gilbert with Matthew in the front, leading the way. Some idle chatter was tossed between us, but it didn't take long for us to get to the venue.

It was basically a club, though a bit bigger than those I had passed in my home town. We paid for our tickets at the door (luckily, they were pretty cheap at five dollars) and then entered. As it turns out, we weren't the only ones from our school that had decided to make this the main feature of their day. In fact, it would seem that most of the students were here. Even a few teachers.

There was a soft, thrumming music playing, but nobody on stage yet. After agreeing to meet Mathias and Lukas around ten to decide if we wanted to go home then, or stay out a bit longer, Su-San and I merged into the crowd. We found a less crowded bit of floor and figured it was as good a place as any to occupy and wait till the show started.

"So, am I really the only one who knew that Matthew existed? I mean, were they kidding when they said they didn't know him?" I asked, projecting a bit to be heard over the music. Su-San frowned (his lips pulled down a milifraction at the corners).

"Nej, they were serious. When he tol' ya tha' nobody notices 'im, he was tellin' the truth. I's no' somethin' we do on purpose, he's jus'..." He tried, trailing off as he tried to think of a word.

"Joo, I know what you mean. I guess he's just easy to miss. That must be really lonely though. I don't have a lot of friends, but at least you guys know I'm there. Um... Thanks for that. I love you, Su-San." I announced, blushing. He rewarded my confession with a kiss, pulling me to him for a hug. Right on time too, as the music transitioned into a slower one. I smiled, wiggling away enough to look up at him.

"Heeeei, wanna dance, handsome?" I drawled obnoxiously, earning a twitch of the lips, in the upwards direction.

"Ah'd love to." He agreed, loosening his hands and moving them to rest on my hips. I reached up for his shoulders, and then began swaying from side to side, moving, I hoped, to the rhythm of the music. Su-San followed my lead, eventually taking over and forcing me to actually take a few steps, as opposed to my stationary swaying of choice. After a minute or so, I sighed happily, letting my hands slide down and rest on his chest instead, laying my head on his now unoccupied shoulder. This drew me closer, and sent his hands downwards, just a bit. But I didn't mind.

After a few minutes of lovely swaying (with a few steps here and there, courtesy of Su-San) the music changed, and we broke apart with a kiss, opting to join our hands instead. We expected to be waiting a while longer, but at last someone came on to the stage. An announcer of sorts, he explained that the night of multicultural music was beginning, and that the first artist was, predictably, a man from America. Got to start in the homeland, I suppose. The crowd came to full attention as the band came out and claimed their instruments. Following them came the singer, a brunette teen with big baby blues. I suppose he was attractive, but I was too wrapped up in the boy next to me to worry about the one on stage. The music started, and the crowd gave their first cheers of approval as he began to belt his rock song. The guy had some chords, I had to admit. I joined in with the cheering, letting go of my awkwardness, at least for the time being.

We had made it through a Spanish song, and a Chinese song before I even turned away from the stage. I looked to Su-San who had, up to this point, been silent. He didn't look particularly impressed, but nor did he look like he was miserable. I frowned, hating that this was an expression that I couldn't quite read.

"Su-San? Are you bored? If you want to, we can go home..." I offered. Truth be told, I was enjoying myself, but if it was at the expense of Su-San, it wasn't worth it. He shook his head, squeezing my hand gently.

"Yer havin' fun, an' tha's enough reason to stay. No' bored... Jus' no' sure wha' to think. Foreign music is... Weir'." He admitted. I giggled scooting a bit closer as somebody pushed past me.

"You say that, yet I bet if anyone found your CD collection, they'd say that your music is the weird stuff. I mean, the Swedish stuff is expected; you are Swedish after all. But FABBA? I know you like ABBA. That's fine, Swedish. But FABBA? Aren't they like... Australian or something?"

"Like ya can even tal'. Ya listen to death metal." He retorted.

"My obsession with Nightwish has nothing to do with this conversation. At least that's kind of manly! You know, I think I should be the man in the relationship." I decided. He blinked at me.

"Tino, there are so many reasons why ya can' be the..."

"Your argument is invalid. You listen to FABBA." I interrupted, feeling quite proud of myself. He opened and closed his mouth a few times, then shut up. I grinned at my victory, then returned my attention to the stage, finding that we were now hearing a French song. I had to repeatedly remind myself that it WASN'T a bad song, I just had bad associations with French things. At the conclusion of this song, Su-San pulled my hand to get my attention.

"Ya're the girl. Yer wearin' makeup." He said, sounding just as proud as I had. It took me a second to process that, and before I could retort, a British woman came out for her turn. The song was familiar, though I couldn't place it. If I recalled though, it had been in a musical. She performed quite well, her song an emotional, sad one. I clapped as she left, then turned to Su-San.

"You cook and clean, all the time. You're the girl!"

"Tino, tha's sexis'. An' ya still have stuffed animals. Ya're the girl."

Next was a Norwegian singer, who sang Fairytale, the song made famous by Alexander Rybak. I knew that one, as I was an annual Eurovision watcher. His rendition wasn't bad, not at all. But the real Alex would have been better. Granted, I would have run on stage and demanded his autograph, so it might have been for the best. The next singer came on too fast, and I didn't have time to talk in between. She was Italian, and her song was languid, one of those that you couldn't help but sway to, just a bit. Finally, I got my chance.

“You sit down when you pee, you're the girl!” I yelled, loudly enough that several people around us heard and turned to give us looks. Su-San sent them all glares until there wasn't a single eye on us.

“Ya made tha' up. Doesn' coun'.”

“Why not? How do I know, maybe you really do sit when you pee! It totally counts!”

“Fine. Ya buy girls' clothes.”

Out came an Icelandic performer. I had read somewhere that one in every three or four people in Iceland were in a band, an amazing figure. This singer had to be among the better ones in that ratio. She had a strong voice, and the foreign words came off her tongue beautifully. She had me entranced, for sure. Entranced enough that I hadn't thought of a retort yet. I scrambled as the music faded, spitting out the first thing that came to mind.

“Your boobs are bigger!” This got me the eyebrow raise of the century.

“Wha'... Wha' does tha' even mean?” He asked. I flushed at the stupidity of it, but didn't take it back.

“I-I don't know, but it counts!”

He opened his mouth, but was cut off by the Russian performer. I rather liked the sound of the language, though my Finnish blood would never let me admit it. Then I recalled that Ivan was Russian, and I suddenly feared the singer, just a little bit. I mean, if they came from the same country...

I gasped as I was about faced, forced there by hands on my hips.

“Ya have these.” He said, giving my hips a squeeze. “Ya're the girl.” He announced with an air of finality. I was out of ammo, and I think we both knew it. I gave an exaggerated sigh, admitting my defeat.

“Alright, alright. You win this round. But I'll be back.” I warned. He obviously didn't take me serious, but that was to be expected. I wasn't being serious.

An Australian man sang next, followed by a Dane, and then finally what I had been waiting and hoping for. FINLAND! A small, timid looking blonde girl came out, and I frowned with just a little disappointment. I mean, I should have known better than to expect the real Nightwish, but... The song started playing, and it was very soft. It took me a moment, but finally I recognised the song as one of Chisu's. If you know not of Chisu, go learn of Chisu. She is up there with my favorite artists, right next to Nightwish!

I was silent, listening carefully to the lyrics. My Finnish wasn't fluent, but I picked up pieces here and there. The song was about a sad fairy, and a bunch of other mythical creatures that didn't believe she was sad, because fairies just don't do those sorts of things, and then I kind of lost track of it all. But it was pretty none-the-less.

A few countries came after that, and I was starting to worry that Sweden had been left out. But I couldn't have been further from the truth. It was nearing the end of the night, when the lights suddenly went out, making many people in the crowd, myself included, gasp. The announcer appeared in a bright beam of white light, and I could sense the hype that was spreading through the crowd.

“And now, a special treat, this year's Eurovision winner, Loreen, will be performing her winning song; Euphoria. Straight from Sweden, please give a warm welcome to Loreen!”

I won't lie, I got pretty excited. I do watch Eurovision after all! And there she was, walking confidently onto the stage. I whooped with the rest of them before her song began. There was a new magic to seeing it live, and I was thoroughly satisfied with her performance, and joined in with the rapid clapping of the crowd.

We were then informed that that was all of the live performances for the night, but the club was open till six, so we were free to dance the night away if we pleased. And oh, did I please.

I pulled Su-San back into my arms as music started playing from the speakers, setting the beat once more. He caught on quick enough, and joined me in my swaying yet again. I giggled, trying to wiggle my hips like the others around me were. I knew I was failing, but that was okei, I was having fun. I think even Berwald was enjoying himself, a little bit at least. And what did I care what we looked like? I wouldn't see most of these people ever again in my life, and for those that I would... Well, I'd deal with that when it came. Besides, there was a certain, very white German that was dancing a lot worse than me.

At some point, Su-San and I had migrated, and bumped into Mathias and Lukas doing pretty much the same thing we were. We exchanged some hellos, before Lukas claimed he was borrowing me for a bit. Su-San didn't argue, but the look he gave me told me everything he didn't say. "Don't go," and "please don't leave me with this bumbling cretin." I shot him an apologetic smile as I let Lukas pull me into a different part of the crowd.

"So, why did you 'borrow' me this time?" I asked once we had gotten far enough away that there was no chance of us being heard.

"To work on your dancing. It's bordering on the imbecilic." He stated matter-of-factly. My face flushed as my lips pulled into a pout.

"Well THAT wasn't very nice!" I pointed out, letting him pull me closer to him regardless.

"I'm only acting in your best interest. Really." He replied, using his hands on my hips to pull me into a sway. "Remember to pay attention to the rhythm of the music. It doesn't matter how well you dance if it isn't timed right."

"But I was dancing to the ry..."

"If you really think that, then there may be no saving you." He interrupted. "Remember not to stand too far away either. You aren't at a school dance." That said, he yanked me towards him, pulling me flush against his body.

"U-Uh, Lukas? I..."

"Quiet Tino. Be slutty like a good boy." He commanded, syncing his own hips up with mine.

"Right... Um... Is this all I do?" I asked, wrapping my arms around his shoulders. (A much easier task with him, considering he was just a bit taller than me.)

"Pretty much. Unless you want me to teach you how to grind." He deadpanned.

"N-no, I'm good, thanks!" I exclaimed, preparing to run away should he try to do it anyway.

"I didn't think so. That's the advanced class anyway. Just try to have fun. But remember, stay on the beat. And don't stand like this the whole time. Turn around." He didn't wait for me to do so, and spun me in place, pulling me back to him once I had done a 180. "I know it doesn't seem like much, but turning around makes this a lot sexier for the one behind you. And you have a nice ass to start with, so you have a bit of an advantage."

"But Lukas, I'm not trying to get in his pants! I mean, not right now anyway. I don't want him to think I'm a slut!" I argued.

"He won't. Berwald isn't stupid. But he'll definitely appreciate the change. Trust me." He spun me around again, pressing his hips into mine. "But I think I'll keep you a few minutes longer. Dancing with you is a lot easier than with Mathias. He's too damn tall. I guess you have the same problem with Berwald though, huh?"

"I think he's a great height!" I cried in his defense, frowning.

"...Tino, it's okay to say your boyfriend is too tall. Nobody's perfect. It doesn't mean you like him any less. And Berwald's huge."

"Well... I guess so. I like how tall he is though! He can get stuff from the top..."

Our conversation was interrupted by a rather obnoxious whistle, and we both turned to find the source. But, looking around, we couldn't, so we shrugged it off. It wasn't as if it was important to us anyway.

“Dudes, look! Lesbians!” I blinked, looking around again. Finally I found the idiots that were being so loud, a group of boys huddled together. I guessed that they were probably in college, fresh out of highschool. They were looking past us, and I couldn't help but glance that way to see these “lesbians” they spoke of. They would have to be pretty hot to get that much attention. But when I turned, I found no lesbians in sight. Lukas had done the same, and we looked at each other for a second, then back to the guys. They looked at us expectantly.

“Lukas?”

“Yeah?”

“Do they think...”

“Yeah.”

“Wow... Do we really look like girls?”

“According to them. But they're probably drunk.”

“Hey! Hey! Lesbians! You should make out!” One of them shouted. I blinked as several people looked our way.

“Um...”

“Do you see Berwald?” Lukas asked me, and I scanned the crowd behind him.

“Uh, no? Why?”

He didn't answer, deciding instead to press his lips to mine. I blinked stupidly for a moment, my brain definitely not expecting that one at all. Once it had finally caught up, I tried to push away, but Lukas held me fast, not giving me even a bit of wiggle room. He didn't let me pull away until we both needed air, and he himself came away panting.

“W-What the hell, Lukas?” I demanded, glaring at him.

“Shh. It's called fanservice Tino. I don't mean anything by it.” He explained, smiling a bit.

“But...”

“Hush. Give the crowd what it wants, right?” And with that he took my lips again. I struggled just a bit longer, but eventually gave up, realising that there was no escape for me. Make the best of every situation, I suppose. I began to mimic him, tilting my head so he could get closer. After another quick sweep around us, he plunged his tongue in, eliciting a gasp from me. He was a lot more confident in his kissing than Su-San was, and incredibly aggressive. I ended up bending back a bit by the time he was done. But I tried to pay attention, tried to take note of what he was doing. He was more experienced than me, so obviously he had to be doing it better.

We parted to a chorus of whoops and whistles. I blushed, trying not to look anyone in the eye, Lukas included. Lukas did the exact opposite of what I wanted though, and spun me to face the gathered spectators, turning to face them as well.

“Hot huh? Well, here's a bonus. We're both guys.” He announced loudly enough for everyone around us to hear. It took a moment to sink in, and then there was an uproar of disbelief, of disgust, and a sprinkling of “am I gay?” We took the chance to escape, shuffling towards the door. When we had made it outside, we looked at each other and laughed.

“Alright, as weird as it was, I have to admit, that was fun!” I said, giggling.

“That was perfect. I wonder how many of them are questioning their sexuality right now.”

“No kidding! They really thought we were girls!”

“Who thought you were girls?” We both jumped, our heads snapping to look at Mathias.

Berwald was close behind him. “What did we miss?” He asked, a grin on his face. “Do we need to go kick some ass?”

Lukas and I both sighed in relief. So they really hadn't seen.

“No. Just some college assholes. We took care of them ourselves. Are you two ready to go?”

Lukas spoke quickly, obviously trying to change the subject.

"Hell no! It's not even eleven yet! Let's go dance some more!" Mathias whined, giving Lukas puppy dog eyes that would have swayed anyone. Not even Lukas could deny them.

"...Fine." He agreed, letting Mathias take his hand and lead him back inside, leaving me alone with Ber. I did my best not to look nervous, but I knew I would be in trouble if Berwald and I went back in. I imagine Mathias wouldn't care much that Lukas and I had kissed, but Berwald might never forgive me! And people were bound to talk, it was a recent event after all.

"Um... How about you? Are you ready to get going?" I asked. He contemplated it for a second, then nodded. I let out a breath I didn't realise I was holding, then smiled. "Alright." I took his hand and lead him away, hoping to escape before anyone could come out and recognize me.

"So, uh, where did you and Mathias go?" I asked, only just then remembering that they had appeared out of practically nowhere.

"Mathias dragged me out. Wante' to talk." He replied.

"Oh? What about?" I wondered.

"Nothin' Ah ever plan to repea'." Was his quick response. I tilted my head to the side, walking next to him at that point, my fear of being caught dissipating as we got further away from the club. "Trus' me, it's nothin' ya wan' to hear." He warned. I decided to let that one go, considering I myself was keeping a secret from him. I would tell him! Eventually! ...Maybe in a few years.

We were finally in front of the Inn again, and I deemed myself officially safe, so long as Mathias could keep his mouth shut. That was questionable, but I would have faith. I turned to head down the path, but I was held back by Su-San, who didn't budge. I tried again, but he still wouldn't move. I turned to face him, my eyebrow quirked.

"Uh... Aren't we going to our room?" I questioned, but he shook his head.

"Yer hungry." He pointed out, making my brows furrow. I didn't recall mentioning my hunger, as I didn't have any.

"But I'm not..." My stomach interrupted, growling loudly at me in protest. "...Hungry. Please, don't start doing that weird psychic thing that my mom does! I can barely handle it with her!" I moaned. He gave me a small smile, ruffling my hair.

"We aren' psychic, yer jus' predictable. Wha' do ya wan' to ea'?" He asked. I put a finger to my lips in thought, trying to think of something tasty to eat.

"Um... Thai food? It's been ages since I've had any. Do you think they have a place here?" I wondered.

"Ja, Ah do."

And with that we were off. Again, I followed him, trusting that he knew what he was doing. He had yet to fail me, after all. Clearly he paid more attention to things than I did, because fifteen minutes later we were standing in front of a Thai restaurant, one that was on the way to the museum we had visited before. And, what luck, it stayed open till two in the morning. (In its defense, it opened at 8 PM.)

"Su-San, you're magical! Is Thai okei with you?" I asked, just then realising that I hadn't even bothered to ask. He nodded, taking me inside. They were a bit on the busy side, but we didn't have to wait for a table or anything, so it was bearable. It took us a few minutes longer than normal to figure out what we wanted, as Thai wasn't something we ate very often. I decided on a rather spicy dish, while Su-San stayed in his comfort zone, ordering a chicken with a sweet sauce. Once the waitress had retrieved our menus, Berwald took my hand, holding it across the table. I smiled, giving his a squeeze.

"Hei Su-San? I love you a lot." I said, bringing his hand up to my face. I pressed my cheek to his knuckles, letting my eyes close with the sensation of his skin on mine. I opened them

again to see a rather pinkish Su-San. He too pulled my hand towards him, but instead of running it across his cheek, he pressed a kiss there. My heart fluttered at the gesture, and my face too took on a warmer tone.

“Ah love ya too, Fin. More than life.” He replied. I couldn't help but swoon. Su-San was cavities waiting to happen, for sure.

Of course, waitresses have a knack for ruining the moment, and our food arrived then. Still, it wasn't her fault, so I gave her a smile and thanked her before sending her on her way. We set to the food immediately, our stomachs demanding haste. I was nearly half done before I even bothered with speaking again.

“So, is it tasty?” I asked, taking a bite of my own. He speared a piece, and held it out to me. I chuckled, taking the bite. It was indeed pretty good, much milder than my own dish. “Hmm... Not bad at all! Want to try mine?”

“Nej. Spicy.” He replied quickly, retreating back to the safety of his own meal. I giggled, getting back to work on my own as well.

“I figured. It really is tasty though.”

“Ya think salmiakki is tasty too. Can' be trust'.” He returned. I rolled my eyes.

“Oh, come on. Everyone has that weird thing that they eat. You can't assume that everything I eat is gross just because I like salmiakki!”

“Mhm.”

It didn't take long for us to finish, and we decided to share a slice of spice cake before we left. The cinnamon was bit a strong, but it wasn't bad. I bet Su-San that he could do better though, and he promised to try as soon as we returned home. After that we finally headed back to the Inn, and fell into bed as soon as we had opened the door. After a bit of struggling with our clothing (As it is rather difficult to strip while laying down) we shimmied under the covers in only our undergarments, snuggling together, letting our breathing sync up. I sighed happily, looking forward to waking up in his arms the next day; Something I doubt I would ever tire of.

Chapter 35

I woke with most of limbs tangled in either the bedsheets or Su-San, so I decided, after some drowsy deliberation, that I was totally trapped until he woke. Of course, I had to pee so bad I had to wonder if I'd make it to the toilet. But I definitely didn't want to wake Su-San! What's a groggy Finn to do?

I tried to take my mind off of it by thinking about other things instead. I thought of poor little Hanatamago, left alone with my mom so soon after I had brought her home. I thought of Emil and Xiao, hoping for a moment that they had somehow managed to figure out that they were totally perfect for each other, though I doubted that would have happened by now.

"Tino, go to the bathroom." I yelped, resulting in me falling from the bed and hitting my head on the floor.

"Oooow... Don't scare me like that! Jeeze! And how did you know I have to go?" I demanded.

"Yer fidgetin' aroun'. Now go!" He commanded, pointing. I pouted but did so, scrambling a bit in my haste. And I just barely made it, I'll have you know!

I returned feeling much better, and leapt back into bed. I heard a low grunt from Su-San, but no protest. It took some digging through the blankets, but eventually I found him, and I dove in, pulling the covers over my head as well and pressing my body to his. He wiggled over towards the middle, then wrapped an arm around my waist, pulling me up on top of him. I smiled, straddling his waist then laying flat, pressing our chests together.

"I looooooove you!" I cooed, rubbing my face against his collar bone.

"Hnn." Was his only reply.

"Aww, is Mr. Oxenstierna grumpy this morning? That simply won't do!" I decided, sitting up a bit using my elbows. His eyes were barely open, but I could tell that he wasn't truly annoyed with me. Still, it was fun to play around a bit. "Now, what can we do to turn that frown upside down?" I wondered, over enunciating my words as one would do with a child. "...Ya coul' star' by no' wakin' me up a' five in the mornin'..." He replied, and my eyes shot to the alarm clock with disbelief. But, sure enough, it was indeed five AM. I frowned then, five being way too early to be up without any reason.

"...Alright, you got me there. Back to sleep?" I asked. He seemed to think it over, then shook his head.

"No' ye'." He said. I blinked, not having expected that answer.

"Oh... Um, okei, then... Uh, what are we going to do?"

He answered by flipping our positions, pinning me beneath him. His lips found mine, and I spent the next five minutes trying not to suffocate while tangling my tongue with his. He pressed close to me, running fingers through my hair. My hands eventually found their way up his back, holding him to me. When he finally let me breathe, it came in gasps.

"U-um... That's one way to start the day, I suppose..." I whispered, trying to catch my brain up to my body. But all I accomplished by doing that was a flush that spread over my whole body. A certain part of me was feeling VERY excited by all of the early morning attention, that's for sure. But, as Su-San pressed down for another kiss, I learned that he was in a similar state, so I relaxed a bit. The kissing was much shorter this time, and he pulled away only to lay his head next to mine. He rested there for a moment, his hot breath warming the right side of my face.

“Tino...” He breathed, the tone of his voice making me shiver. “...This is our las' day here...” He pointed out, running a hand up my side. “It'll be har', once we ge' back home, to...” He trailed off, obviously too embarrassed to finish. But he didn't need to, I knew what he was talking about. It felt like my heart fell into the acid of my stomach in that moment, and my lip trembled.

“I-I...” I began, unable to produce any other words. He waited patiently, pressing his nose to my pulse, his lips brushing against my neck. A good tactic, I had to admit. I was too focused on what he was doing to really think about what he was implying. “I... I mean, we... Um...”

“If ya aren' ready, then we don' have to. Ah jus'...”

“That's not it!” I interrupted. “I definitely want to! I just... I'm scared is all. S-Sorry...”

“Don' be sorry. Ah'm no' angry or anythin'. Bu'...” He too trailed off, pursing his lips. We were quiet for a while, but he finally shifted, rolling off to lay beside me, turning me on my side to face him. He stared at me for a while, and I did my best to return the gaze without faltering.

“Tino... Ah wan' to try somethin'. Do ya trus' me?” He asked, brushing some hair from my face. I smiled, nodding without even thinking about it.

“Of course I do! But, um... Will it hurt?” I asked, my brows knitting upwards.

“Nej.” He promised, punctuating it with a kiss. I smiled, planning on claiming his lips again as soon as he pulled away, but he didn't give me the chance, kissing down my jaw, then neck, and collar. I shuddered, my eyes flying shut in an instant. That definitely felt nice. He came to my recently discovered hyper-sensitive nipples, taking one in his mouth and the other between two fingers, stimulating them simultaneously. I couldn't hold back the cry that came out, and I flushed immediately at the sheer vulgarity of it. But Su-San didn't seem bothered by it, and continued, removing the hand that had been playing with my nipple and moving it downwards. He gave my hip a squeeze then ventured down even more, brushing over my still-clothed arousal. I groaned, my erection reawakening at once. But he didn't linger there for very long, going instead to my thigh, giving it a gentle squeeze. Without so much as a word he slipped my boxers off, tossing them away carelessly. I blushed a bit, but figured that he had already seen all there was to see. No point in trying to hide it now. He finally pulled his mouth away, bringing his eyes to my level.

“Spree' yer legs fer me, please.”

I did as he said, lifting one of my legs with a little effort. He rolled so that he was on his other side, and reached for something. After a bit of awkward stretching he turned to his back and shimmied out of his own boxers, then turned to face me again. In one hand was a small plastic bottle filled with a clear liquid. I didn't have to think very hard to figure out what it was.

“W-Where did you get that?” I questioned as he opened it.

“Mathias. Don' wan' to talk 'bou' i'.” He replied. I didn't push it any further than that. But my heart rate had definitely picked up at the sight of it. I thought I had made it clear to him that I didn't want to go “all the way” yet. But perhaps he hadn't understood? Maybe he thought that he could warm me up to the idea?

“S-Su-San? Um...” He didn't acknowledge me at all, and continued to mess with the small bottle, opening it and squeezing some of the lubrication into his hands. “Hei, I said...” He cut me off with his hands, rubbing them along the inside of my thighs. I blinked, not sure what he was doing or why he was wasting lube on my thighs.

“Ah though' ya sai' ya trusted me.” He said, rubbing the rest onto his own arousal. I frowned, letting my leg fall, the strain from holding it up being a bit too much. It felt strange, my thighs slippery and soft.

"I-I do. Sorry." I agreed, feeling guilty for having worried at all. He knew what I meant, I had to assume that. And if he went too far out of my comfort zone, I could tell him to stop and he definitely would. That much I was sure of.

"Press yer thighs together, as har' as ya can." He instructed, and I did as he said, forcing my muscles to tighten. He scooted closer, hooking a leg over my own, pulling my body to his that way. I waited, finally starting to put together what it was that he was going to do. I had heard of this, actually. It was called... Um... Inter-something.

He didn't give me much more time to think, thrusting himself between my thighs. The heat was unexpected, and I gasped. He paused, making sure that I was okei with the way things were proceeding, then began a slow rhythm of thrusting. At first I was a bit worried that he would be the only one getting any strong pleasure from this. I mean, my thighs were sensitive, but not that sensitive. But he seemed to notice, and angled himself a little differently, resulting in friction to the underside of my member. I wailed as he picked up the pace, the combined sensation enough to drive me insane. I snaked my arms around him, pressing my chest to his in a sudden need for closeness, my lips brushing his pectorals, my breath falling against his already hot skin. He held me by the hips, pulling me to him with every thrust. He would whisper my name every few thrusts, would kiss me feverishly, would give my bum a little squeeze... It seemed to last hours, but it was only minutes before we were both releasing, garbling out each others names as we did.

We lay panting for a good two or three minutes, then we shifted positions to get more comfortable, snuggling up against one another. I smiled, wiggling up to steal a kiss, or maybe it was five, before finally resting my head against his collar and closing my eyes. We'd definitely need a shower when we awoke, but we could squeeze a few more hours of sleep in. And after all of that, we would need it.

I was just fading back into sleep when I heard his voice, sounding rather smug.

"Weren' in the shower this time." He pointed out, eliciting a small chuckle from me before I completely surrendered to my exhaustion.

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For what seemed like the first time in ages, we weren't woken abruptly by a knock or shouting outside the door. And, lo and behold, Su-San actually woke up before me! It had been a while since that happened too! When my eyes finally managed to open up, I noticed that he was breathing a bit too fast for him to still be asleep, and, sure enough, he was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed when I looked up at him. Well, as bright-eyed and bushy-tailed as is possible for him, anyway. I smiled, scooting up and pressing my lips to his. He didn't hesitate to wrap his arms around me and draw me close to him, putting a hand at the nape of my neck to help support it while he tilted me back a bit.

I swooned at the new development in his affection-showing: he had never kissed me like this before, and I had to admit that I rather liked it, quite a bit. I too wrapped my arms around him, using the sturdiness of his neck to keep me from falling back. (Perhaps my abs could have handled it, had they not been pathetic and nonexistent...) He didn't seem to mind the extra weight though, and continued to kiss me. I could have complained about his breath, or even my own; several hours of sleep are not kind. But I didn't really mind. This was part of Su-San, and a part of me, and I'd learn to love it just as much as I loved him. And, truth be told, it wasn't bad as you might expect. Maybe Su-San just has a really clean mouth, but I couldn't really detect much difference between his morning kisses and those from midday. He finally pulled away from me, making me realise that we had been lip-locked for several minutes. I huffed a bit in an attempt to replenish my oxygen supply, but it wasn't nearly as bad as the first time we had made out. We stared at each other for a bit, but the tension ended

up bringing our lips together yet again, this time a little more fervently, with hands running down my back. But, thankfully, he stopped before it could escalate any more. I blinked dazedly, trying to focus my vision on his face again.

“S-So are we really getting up this time?” I wondered, still trying to catch up.

“Ja. 's pas' noon.” He replied, nodding his head in the direction of the alarm clock. His words rang true, and I groaned, shutting my eyes and leaning into his chest.

“That suuuuucks. What can we do now? I'm sure Mathias and Lukas already left to do something, and I can't think of anything interesting, and honestly, I can't believe we slept so late! And we still need to take a shower, and god only knows...”

He cut me off with a kiss, and a soothing hand rubbing at the base of my spine. I melted, shutting up immediately. He pulled away, and after a brief pause, I sighed, giggling.

“From now on, make sure that you interrupt me like that. I'm not even angry.” I demanded, and he nodded, standing up. He took me with him, pulling me by the hand, and led me into the depths of the bathroom for what would turn out to be the first of four showers we would have that day.

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We kept our shower relatively clean, only mild fooling around happening. After a very short amount of debating, we decided to just visit the beach, as we had yet to do so here. And sure, a beach here is a beach there, but to me, every beach is a new experience. We fished around for our swimsuits, eventually remembering that we had tossed them into the sink in the bathroom after the trip to the water-park. We retrieved them, quickly changing into them and grabbing t-shirts to wear until it was appropriate to appear otherwise. A sunscreen-massage and hunt for flip-flops later, we were on our way to the beach, in high spirits.

We chatted idly on the way, wondering how this beach could compare to the one we had visited at home, assuming that it would have to be better, considering it was a part of Faiacre. But who knows, life is full of surprises. It took us about twenty minutes to get there, where we finally shed our t-shirts and headed for the water.

We played for a bit, mostly a game of try-to-keep-up-with-Berwald-Phelps-while-he-tactfully-swims-away, and, as you know, throw-the-Tino is always a crowd favorite.

Eventually we tired, and opted to simply float for a bit, hand in hand. Berwald kept an eye on our position, making sure that we never strayed too far from shore, for which I was thankful. It was nice to relax with all of that water and love surrounding me. I closed my eyes, letting the dull red glow warm my eyelids, and Su-San warm my fingers. After quite a long spell of this relaxing, we righted ourselves, and began swimming, not really sure where we were going, and not really caring. Eventually we got far enough away from the publically-used part of the beach that we found the shore surrounded by small pinnacles, and, somehow, managed to locate a small indent in the wall; One big enough for us to relax in.

Su-San climbed up first, then offered me his hand and helped me up as well. I thanked him with a kiss, then pulled him down, waiting till he sat and then claiming his lap. He wrapped his arms around me, coaxing me backwards until I hit his chest, where I rested, nestled between the warmth of the late summer sun and the thriving life behind me. I smiled, feeling absolutely content in that moment, held tight in his arms, his heartbeat steady and strong as it resonated through both of us.

We were silent for a time, then he began pressing kisses to my temple, whispering of his love for me. I giggled girlishly, turning my face as far as I could to receive his lips to mine instead. After this failed, straining us both, he decided to turn me around, using his hands to bring my body flush against his, tilting my head back for some more kisses. I curled my knees underneath me, using them to push the rest of my body up so I could better return the

affection, and he supported me with hands on my lower back. I was thankful that we had found such a secluded place, as we probably would have been interrupted by now by some homophobe or another. They're everywhere.

We stayed there for a bit longer, simply enjoying each other's company and the feeling of our sun-warm skin pressed together, then we leapt back into the water and swam back to the beach where we had started. It was noticeably less crowded, but not yet deserted. However, as soon as the sun went down, there would be a mad rush to escape. We decided to avoid the rush and head out early. We located our long-abandoned shirts, learning that some kids had built sand castles upon them. While I hated to destroy the cute little structures, I needed my shirt, and it was naughty of the children to build them there in the first place.

As covered in sand as they were, our shirts needed a thorough rinsing, so we headed to the little beach showers and sprayed them, and us, off. Shower number two. After that, we made a quick trip back to the inn, changing into street clothes and better walking shoes before going out again. Eating a big dinner only occupied a couple hours of our time, so we opted for another round of aimless walking.

The streets were now dark, the only light coming from the half moon and the stylized street lamps placed periodically. If I had been alone, it might have been eerie, but walking with Su-San was somehow empowering. While we had no destination in our minds, it felt like we were going somewhere. I would just have to wait and see. Eventually we came to a fork in the pathway, one going straight, doubtlessly leading towards the center of town, one going left. I had no clue where that one could possibly go, but it looked deserted. I don't have the stomach for many scary movies, but of the ones I have seen, it always begins with going down a deserted street. But there was something about that street... I looked up to Su-San, and I could tell he was thinking the same thing.

We took the left, walking close together. Why we made this decision when it made both of us uncomfortable, I'll never know. At first it seemed much like the rest of Faiacre, buildings lining both sides of the street, a few trees here and there. But the buildings began to disperse, and more trees seemed to pop out of nowhere. Still, there were streetlamps every ten or so feet, so it was obviously made for people to walk back here. We kept walking, now determined to see what it was that could be so far away from the rest of civilization. At some point Su-San shifted his hand out of mine and wrapped it instead around my waist, pulling me close to him. Finally, the trees began to recede, the path widening, forcing me to realise that it had, at some point, narrowed. And I could smell salt. The beach? But the entrance to the beach was much closer to the inn. Why would there be two entrances? And why was this one so obscure? Or perhaps there was another explanation for the salty smell? Maybe a long abandoned sea-salt factory or something? But no, I could hear the waves. We came to a clearing, and, sure enough, I could see the vast ocean before me, the usually aqua colored water dyed a deep navy by the darkness of night. We were standing on a small cliff, maybe more of a pinnacle, honestly, overlooking the ocean. There wasn't a beach in sight, though. "Well... I guess this is a nice view... I expected a bit more from the long walk though." I admitted. I anticipated him agreeing, but he pointed instead.

Following his finger, I found that he was pointing to the path, which led to the right and downwards. I looked at him, then nodded my head. We followed it down, and found ourselves in front of a coral reef. The path ended here, leading directly to it.

"So... Are we supposed to climb it or something?" I asked. Su-San shrugged, stepping forward. He climbed up a bit, then offered me a hand, helping me up as well.

"Careful. Don' cu' yerself. Migh' ge' tetanus." He warned. I rolled my eyes, but stepped lightly just in case. Tetanus doesn't sound like much fun. I swear I got a shot for that though...

We made our way up, then back down, then up a bit more, and finally, as we were coming over the little crest, we found what we were probably supposed to find. There was a rather large tide pool at the bottom, very shallow. The moonlight was hitting it just right, and it was practically glowing. I gasped, the sight breathtaking. I had to mentally thank the stars that my request to stumble upon a terribly romantic place had been granted.

“Ya wan' to go down? Shoes'll ge' we'.” He pointed out.

“I don't care! Let's go!” I exclaimed, pulling his hand, leading him down. I stopped right before My feet hit the water, making sure I wouldn't be stepping on anything alive. Seeing that the coast was clear, I stepped in. The water was warm, being separated from the vast ocean allowing for more even heating. Su-San followed me into the water, looking down at the colorful fish that had gotten trapped while the tide was low. I giggled as one brushed my leg and bent down to get a closer look. Most of the fish were pretty small, and I could only recognize a few. There were sea anemone sprouting up occasionally, and I reminded myself to be careful not to touch them.

I was about to turn to Su-San, to ask him what he thought, when I felt something wet touch my face. I shrieked, falling backwards, landing on my butt in the water. My eyes were wide, and I was panicking a bit, considering the wet sensation wasn't going away. My hand shot up to touch my cheek, and I found that my skin was feeling a bit... slimy, and too hard. I pulled at it, and, with a soft pop, a starfish fell into my hand. I stared at it incredulously for a moment, then looked up to Su-San. The fact that he was turned away from me, his hand covering his mouth pinned him as the culprit. I glared, standing up with a splash.

“Oh, you think that's funny?” I demanded, dropping the starfish back into the water. He refused to make eye contact, looking to the left instead. I fumed, crossing my arms over my chest. “Look at me when I'm being angry with you!” I ordered. He did so, looking at me straight on. He already looked like he regretted what he'd done. I stared him down, narrowing my eyes as much as I could. He shifted, obviously uncomfortable. “Now, answer my question.” He gave me a guilty look. “Did you think that was funny?” I demanded yet again. He opened his mouth, probably about to apologize, but I jumped up and claimed his lips instead. “Because I did.” I said, grinning.

It took him a while before he caught up, but when he did he groaned, collapsing into the water, taking me with him.

“Don' scare me like tha'! Ah though' ya were serious!” He scolded, hugging me. I laughed, kissing his cheek. “Ah though' ya were goin' to ge' mad and break up with me...” He admitted. I frowned.

“You thought I would break up with you over something like that... Break up with you at all? That would have been a pretty short lived relationship!” I chided, snuggling up to him.

“Well, wha' was Ah supposed to think? Ya looked pretty mad...” He pointed out. I pouted, pulling back to look at him again.

“Okei, okei, I'm sorry. But you DID stick a starfish to my face.” I reminded him.

“Ja, I did. You made tha' starfish look good.” He deadpanned, and I giggled.

“Is that so? Well, I'll make sure to start wearing more starfish. I mean, they ARE all the rage in the fashion community, so it would only make sense. But right now I'm more concerned with the fact that I'm wet down to my underwear...”

“Ja. Wan' to head back?” He asked.

“Yes, please. I could use a good shower.”

“Okej. Come on.” He offered me a hand, pulling me to my feet. I followed him back to the pathway, and we began our way back to the inn, hand in hand and sopping wet. We had just emerged from the narrowed part of the path when I noticed that it had, quite suddenly, gotten

darker. I looked up to try and discern the reason for this, and found that the moon was covered with a thick layer of clouds, very dark, very scary looking clouds. I was just about to ask Su-San if he thought it was going to rain when a drop of water hit me square in the nose. I frowned, feeling another on my shoulder, then the crown of my head. The droplets came exponentially faster, and I groaned, taking Su-San's hand and making a mad dash towards the inn. Current shower count: three. Luckily for us, when we arrived, soaked and panting, the staff took pity and brought us some towels to dry off with before we trudged upstairs, doubtlessly trailing a mess behind us. I scrubbed my head with the towel I had been provided, pouting with annoyance.

“When I said shower, I meant the bathroom kind! That was NOT funny!” I growled, then proceeded to sneeze loudly. Su-San frowned, wrapping his own towel around me. I gave him a smile, hoping to reassure him that I was quite alright, but he insisted on leading me to our room by the waist, just in case I toppled over or something. With a little effort on his part, he managed to get the door open while still supporting me, and immediately took me into the bathroom, depositing me on the toilet.

He started some bath water, then returned to me, helping me shimmy out of my wet clothes, which he tossed carelessly into the sink with out swimming suits. I shivered as the cold porcelain met my now bare and already chilled skin, but waited patiently while he too undressed. He helped me to my feet, and ushered me into the shower, pulling the stopper and letting me hog all of the hot water. But I couldn't complain too much, I was enjoying the warmth way too much to think of much else. Make that shower number four.

We managed to take this shower completely sexual-advance free, but that was likely due to our shared exhaustion. There had been a lot of exercise today, between swimming in the ocean and climbing the reef. Not to mention all the walking. Su-San ended up having to dry me off, as I was too out of it with fatigue and drowse to do it myself. I didn't even have the energy to raise protest as he pulled me into bed without any pyjamas, my hair unbrushed and sure to be a frizzy mess in the morning. What did it matter anyway? He was more than familiar with my body now, and my hair had always been a morning disaster. (I kid you not. There are pictures of me, only a few months old, with my hair sticking up in ridiculous tufts.) What had I to hide?

I sighed as I snuggled into his chest, adoring the way he automatically wrapped his arms around me, strong, protective, and oh so loving, and without so much as a thought. It didn't take long for the beat of his heart and the rhythm of his breathing to lull me into a fitless sleep. Packing could wait until tomorrow.

Chapter 36

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

We awoke the next morning to a knock, but instead of the usual Mathias and Lukas, it was Mr. Raimondo, reminding us that we needed to be ready to head back to the airport in two hours. I was thankful that he had come, as we probably wouldn't have had time to pack if he hadn't. With quite a bit of effort on Su-San's part, I was hauled out of bed and dressed in some shorts and a t-shirt. He went to fetch us some breakfast, instructing me to begin the task of folding clothes and shoving them into suitcases.

I did so very mechanically, not really looking at what I was doing, nor whose clothes I was folding, not even whose suitcase I was tossing them into. It didn't really matter anyway, we lived next door to each other, after all. Su-San returned a few minutes later, bringing tribute of bagels and juice. I smiled, munching lazily on my share, laying my head sleepily on his shoulder when he sat down next to me on the bed to eat.

It felt a bit weird to think that we would be back at home tomorrow morning, back to a normal, boring routine. It seemed almost surreal to me. But I would at least have Su-San to liven up my days! After all, we were together now, so everything was new. It's funny how something so small can change an entire perspective.

We finished up with breakfast, then resumed packing. The bathing suits and wet clothes from the day before were the last to be packed in hopes that they would dry as much as possible. They were still a bit damp, but it would have to do, as we were running out of time. Mr. Raimondo came again to give us a half hour warning. We sighed, bidding our room goodbye. It had seen a lot more than it probably ever needed to, being the first place we had been “together.” And I hope you know what I mean when I say together...

We left, walking down to the lobby and turning in our key, then we headed outside with our luggage to get a little fresh air before we were crammed onto an airplane. It was a beautifully sunny day, but the air was thick from the rainfall, making breathing a sticky affair. Still, it felt nice to have the sun on my skin, and I knew it would be a while before we could relax like this again. We held hands, despite the heat, leaning against a tree.

When we were down to about ten minutes, Mathias and Lukas joined us, sitting across from us and making small talk. And not even two minutes later came Emil and Xiao, who sat suspiciously close to each other, considering they still insisted they were just friends. I smiled knowingly, giving Su-San's hand a squeeze, earning me a kiss on the cheek.

And, finally, it was time to go. We joined the other students as they headed out to the bus. I picked Kiku and Ivan out from the crowd, mostly from the sheer height of Ivan. They were chatting, and Kiku seemed to be a lot more comfortable around the giant than he was when I first saw them together. I also spotted Matthew and a very pouty looking Gilbert, who was being forcefully ushered onto the bus by his brother.

Lukas, Mathias, Su-San, and I all sat in one row, with Emil and Xiao behind us, sitting next to Antonio and Romano. That was an interesting bus ride, full of lots of cursing, that's for sure. For the most part, we just laughed at some of the ridiculous insults Romano was shouting (“saggy-balled shit-pickle was my personal favorite), though we contributed a few times.

It didn't take long to get to the airport, and, after a quick roll-call, we all shuffled onto the

plane. I can proudly say that Lukas fell asleep two seconds before I did. I think. I never manage to stay awake during plane rides, regardless of the amount of sleep I had beforehand. I might actually be terribly afraid of flying, but I'm never awake to freak out.

Su-San woke me with a few kisses, letting me know that we had landed and it was about time to get off. I blinked stupidly, then nuzzled my face into his neck, fully intending on returning to sleep. But he thwarted my plan by kissing me all over, forcing me to reciprocate the affection, and eventually waking me up enough that I couldn't fall back asleep. Totally evil, I know.

Finally, we were directed off the plane and onto some waiting school buses, which began the short trip back to school. I managed to remain conscious, and even got into the right car when we got back to school. Emil said goodbye to Xiao, climbing into the backseat with Lukas and Mathias. Su-San took him home first, listening carefully to the simple directions. Emil got out with a quick hug from Lukas, retrieving his suitcase from the trunk and stumbling his way into his house after fumbling with a key for a bit. That was a sure sign that he too was tired.

Su-San turned around, heading towards our homes, making quick work of getting there. He pulled into the parking lot of his house, parking his car. An air of finality washed over us as he cut the engine, and we let our trip die with the fading humming of the car. Back to normal life it was.

We somehow managed to exit the car without any fatal injuries, though Mathias did hit his head on the roof on his way out, earning a few snickers from Lukas and I as he cursed in pain. (For once, it wasn't me!) Su-San pulled our suitcases out, distributing them to each of us in turn. We looked at each other awkwardly, then parted ways after some brief goodbye-kisses. Lukas and I shuffled to my house, which was unlocked, of course. My mother was at work by then, so the house was quiet as we went upstairs to deposit our things. Of course, I had neglected to think of a certain white fluff-ball I had recently adopted, and she was none too pleased with me. She nosed my door open, strutting in as if she owned the place. She stared at us for a moment, then took a running leap at me, only managing to hit my knee. But I understood what she wanted and sat on the floor, letting her jump into my lap. She jumped to lick my face, alternating that with rolling around on my lap. I petted her obediently, smiling.

"What's up, cutie? Did you miss me?" I asked. She gave me a look, then shoved her little nose into my palm, demanding more attention. I chuckled, petting her for a bit longer, then I turned to Lukas. One look shared between us, and we both knew it was time for a good nap. I maneuvered the living cotton-ball off of my lap, then changed into some pyjamas, throwing some to Lukas as well, and promptly fell into bed without a second thought, only stopping to scoop Hanatamago into my arms so she could lay with me.

I heard Lukas shuffle for a bit, then a few footsteps, and finally heard him flop onto his pile of blankets on the floor. I relaxed for a bit, then realised how stupid it was that Lukas was on the floor like that. I rolled over, dipping my head off the bed.

"Hei, come cuddle with us!" I demanded, and he quickly complied, crawling into bed with me and wrapping his arms around my waist. I giggled, doing the same to him. Perhaps he was a bit bony, but I could live with that; he was the perfect temperature for cuddling. He took a deep breath, snuggling into my body as if he had done it countless times, his nose brushing mine.

"You know Tino, if I didn't know any better, I'd think you totally have a crush on me." He pointed out, his feet finally finding mine and tangling with them. I smiled, locking one of my knees with his.

"I could say the same about you, you know. But I won't even deny it. I looooooooooove you!" I drawled, earning me a small smile.

"Well, you're definitely my favorite cuddle-buddy. Now hush, I'm sleepy." He commanded.

"Yessir. Night!"

With that, we fell to silence, breathing slowly, comfortably, just drinking in the calm of the day. Hanatamago eventually decided to get in on the cuddlefest, and wiggled her way into the little space between our bodies, settling herself there. Finally, we dozed off, limbs tangled, and sheets everywhere.

The sound of voices, whispering voices, is what woke me up. After some groggy deliberation, I decided it was Mathias talking, probably to Su-San. I wondered why they were whispering, but only for a moment, realising that they were trying not to wake Lukas and I. I strained my ears, wanting to hear what they were saying.

"Okay, maybe they really ARE cheating on us... With each other..." Mathias admitted. Su-San was quiet for a while.

"Ah don' think so. Tino is a naturally cuddly kin' of person. An' Ah think Lukas jus' likes 'im more than ya." He pointed out, sounding a bit smug towards the end. "Ah know Ah do." It took Mathias a second to process that.

"...Hey! That's not nice. My little Norge is totally head over heels for me! No way can short stuff there compete!" He retorted. I frowned at the short comment, but decided to keep up my facade of sleep.

"Wha'ever ya say. An' he's no' tha' shor'..." Su-San said, defending me, much to my pleasure.

"Are you kidding? He's like, five foot!" Mathias replied. EXCUSE me?

"He's five seven. Better no' le' 'im hear ya sayin' tha'. He'll figh' ya... And probably win..."

Su-San finished, and I could barely hold back a chuckle. What an awesome boyfriend.

"Okay you two, that's enough talking about us like we aren't here." Lukas said, startling me. Apparently he had been awake too. I heard Su-San make a small noise of surprise, and heard a thump, telling me that Mathias had probably fallen over in his surprise. Lukas and I both sat up, releasing the other in the process, and looked over at our startled boyfriends. I smiled at Berwald, scooting over and opening my arms for him. He didn't hesitate to walk over and wrap me up in a hug, one that lifted me off the bed just a bit. Hanatamago had long since stirred, and yipped excitedly, pawing at Berwald until he gave her some attention. Mathias made puppy-dog eyes at Lukas, obviously hoping he'd offer the same.

"And he was right. I do like Tino more than you." Lukas spat, crossing his arms over his chest. Mathias looked crestfallen, his brows drawn up like he was going to cry. But Lukas didn't relent, staying still, not a single change in his expression. I turned back to Mathias to see his lip trembling. But still no response from Lukas. Back to Mathias, and he was actually producing tears. I blinked, surprised by this display. Mathias was actually sensitive? The thought had never crossed my mind.

Finally, Lukas gave in, sighing. He uncrossed his arms, granting silent permission. Mathias immediately perked up, all semblances of sadness and hurt gone from his face as he grinned and dove at the bed, grabbing Lukas around his middle. Lukas was effectively winded and flattened to the bed at the same time. I watched them go down, a small smile forming on my lips. Well, as odd as it was, their way of interacting with each other was pretty cute.

We all canoodled on my bed for a bit before Mathias turned his head my way, and gave me a huge shit-eating grin.

"Hey, so I'd really like to fuck his lights out. Mind finding something to do for about thirty minutes?" He asked bluntly, his grin never faltering. I blanched, my face going absolutely red. Was he serious? "Ow! Hey, I'm just being honest!" He whined, holding a hand to his

chest where Lukas had just punched him.

"I-In here?" I asked stupidly, and they both looked at me for a moment. Thankfully, Su-San saved me.

"Go to mah room. Clean up after yerselves." He warned. Mathias didn't even wait for Lukas to reply, grabbing his hand and dragging him out into the hallway. I heard them thumping down the stairs, and heard the door shut behind them. I blinked, still in a daze about the whole thing.

"Um... Did they just..."

"Ja."

"Oh. Well, uh, thanks for offering your room as sacrifice."

"Ja."

"...Um...So, what's up?" I asked awkwardly. He didn't reply, deciding instead to lay on top of me, the sudden addition of his weight knocking me down. "S-Su-San?" I questioned. He tangled his fingers in mine, laying his head in the space between my head and shoulder. His breath fell, warm against my neck, as he breathed evenly. "Are we going to sleep again?" I asked.

"I love ya, Tino." He whispered.

"I love you too." I replied automatically, not even having to think about it. "But you know that, silly. What's the matter? Did it bother you that I snuggled with Lukas?" I wondered. He didn't reply, didn't move. I smiled, thinking his jealousy was rather cute. "Hei, don't worry. I like cuddling with Lukas, but he's not my boyfriend. No need to be jealous! I love you most of all in the whole world!" I gushed. He propped himself up on his elbows, looking me in the face. I could see a little blush covering his cheeks, and smiled appreciatively at the rare color. He leaned down, claiming my lips with a kiss. It was soft, just a brushing of the lips, and he was gone.

Perhaps it wasn't as physical as Lukas and Mathias, but our relationship suited me just fine. I liked moments like this, when we could just stare at each other in silence, take in the calmness of the moment, express our love without words. I wondered to myself if Mathias and Lukas ever had times like this, and guessed they must.

Su-San lowered himself, resuming his position from before. He was a bit heavy, but the weight was comforting, and very warm. His dad was probably a space heater. (Granted, I'd never know. I didn't get to meet him before he died.) Su-San was too warm for his relations to be anything else. I relaxed, letting our breathing fall into the same pattern as I closed my eyes again. I could definitely go for a few more hours of sleep, especially if I got to have a Su-San blanket. Hanatamago seemed to be alright with another nap as well, making herself quite comfortable on Su-San's back. I mean, what could be better, right?

And when we woke up, we'd probably go and collect Mathias and Lukas, maybe go to a park and relax for a bit, or just take Hanatamago out for a walk. Mom would probably be home by then... Berwald and I had some explaining to do, but I'm sure mom knows how I feel about him. She's clever like that. But I was definitely never going to hear the end of it from her. But it didn't really matter, as long as we were together. And I assumed we'd be that way for the rest of our lives. After all, there's no such thing as coincidence, obviously we were fated to be together, distance, awkwardness, a fluffy, white little cock-blocks be damned.

I suddenly realised that there wasn't any expression in the entire world that could replace the word "Love." In the end, the general idea behind a simple word is so deeply imprinted on our minds that we can't deny its unspeakable meaning. Have I even dreamed about having feelings like this? The sticky summer heat... The dull and lifeless afternoons... My

suffocating lungs that only breathed ashen breaths... All these dark feelings evaporate into thin air without a trace, by his presence alone. So, the road to the oasis of life is the road towards love.

-Let Dai by Sooyeon Won

FIN

Chapter End Notes

HAHA, get it? FIN? Because Finland? Haha, okei, sorry, I like to finish with quotes. Well, this is it guys! But don't fret, I've already got some ideas for the sequel. But I think I will be taking a break for a bit before I start posting that. I'd like to finish up with Fourteen Days, and work on some other fics I have in the working stages. So it's safe to say you haven't seen the last of me!

I know this is kind of short for a last chapter, but I didn't want to put too much into it, for fear that I would set something up, and end up writing more. Sorry about that! Well, it feels weird to be completely finished with a fic. That's never happened to me before! Like, I actually get to say something is complete! Crazy! And 36 chapters? That's outrageous! It could be a book! Hmm... No, that's probably illegal or something. I don't own these guys, They all belong to Himaruya. And He's a great guy for inventing them. Four for you Himaruya, you go Himaruya!

Alright, well, I think that's it guys. Thanks to all of you for all of your continued support. You've taken me from a amateur teenage girl, trying to write a SuFin for the first time, hoping for maybe ten to twenty reviews, to a rather polished, slightly older teenage girl with more than eight hundred reviews on her first SuFin. Every review reminds me that there is someone out there that enjoys my writing, even though it definitely isn't the best in the world. You've all helped me to grow, and I got to make connections to countless people, in innumerable countries that I wouldn't have had a chance to meet otherwise. For this, and your patience, I thank you. I hope to improve in the future, and I would love to have the chance to entertain all of you again, so please remember me, and I hope to see you all again when I start with the sequel!

End Notes

This entire story is actually a reprint from Fanfiction. I'm currently backing up my account. I started this story a few years ago, and finished it pretty recently, so I'd just like to let you know that the writing, and story, improves as it progresses. It was my first time with a SuFin, so I had to figure out the characters to start with. Once I got used to them, and figured out where I was going with the story, it got much better. Just to prove the validity of my statement, this story currently has 832 reviews and about as many follows and favorites. So stick with me, it gets better, I promise!

I'll also apologise in advance for any mistakes. I've been made aware of quite a few of them, and I plan on going through and editing the entire story, but I currently have other projects that I'm working on, so that will have to wait. For now, the mistakes will stay. The big ones will be some grammar issues, (Which a grammar nazi friend of mine has made sure I am aware of...) Some misspelled foreign words, and a few cultural mistakes. (To say I knew little of my heritage before this story would be an understatement. Getting back to your Finnish roots takes a lot of doing.) If you can excuse them for now, I promise to fix them in the future.

Anyway, like the story itself, my notes will also be copied over for the most part. So if something sounds strange or out of place, that's why! Thank you for taking the time to read!

KuroRiya
九六りや

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!